THE

Most Pleasant and Delightful

HISTORY

OF

REYNARD the FOX.

THE

SECOND PART.

Containing

Much Matter of Pleasure and Content.

WRITTEN

For the Delight of young Men, Pleasure of the Aged, and Profit of all.

To which is added many Excellent Morals.

Here read the Fox, *his Nature, and his Art,*
Who in this Story acts the greatest Part.
Him here you find advanced highly, and
In this his Grandeur for a time to stand;
Till he aspiring further, Treachery
Contrived, and did for his Treason *die.*

LONDON, Printed by *A. M.* and *R. R.* for *Edward Brewster*, at the Sign of the *Crane* in St. *Pauls Church-yard*, 1681.

TO THE READER.

Courteous Reader.

IT is well known that publick Works neceſſarily undergo a publick Cenſure; and how diligently careful ſoever any Man is, who expoſeth this or that to the view of all, he ſhall meet with praiſe or diſpraiſe, more frequently according to the underſtanding or affection of the Cenſurer, than according to the worth or invalidity of what he preſents. Therefore ſince I beg not the Patronage of any, nor would I by any Man be miſunderſtood, and ſo cauſleſly cenſured

as an impertinent Writer: I have to the ſubſequent *Work* (which I was minded to have committed to the Preſs without Marginal Notes) added a *Moral*, or *Expoſition* of my own; in doing which, I hope no Man will be ſo diſingenuous as to wreſt my words to a ſenſe contrary to my true and proper intent

I, in the following Hiſtory, aim not at the reproach or ſlander of any Man or Men whatſoever; but do only deſire thy Content and Recreation with delight and profit. *Farewell.*

Read and peruſe this Little Book, when care
And penſive thoughts to be expelled are.

THE

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A CON-

THE SECOND PART

Of the Pleaſant and Delightful

HISTORY

OF

REYNARD the FOX.

CHAP. I.

How the King and *Reynard* the Fox conſulted together about chuſing a chief Prelate in the place of *Bellin* the Ram, who (as you heard in the former Part) was convicted of the murder of *Keywart* the Hare (though falſly), and ſo put to Death; and how *Iſegrim* the Wolf was made chief Prelate, &c. The Fox and he reconciled.

NOW after the Fox his Victory againſt Iſegrim the Wolf, he was not only honoured by the King and all his Subjects with the Title of Lord Reynard, but

 alſo

also grew very inward and familiar with the King himself, insomuch as none could be admitted to any private conference with his Majesty, unless he first made way by the favour of the Lord Reynard.

This did not a little disturb Sir Isegrim the Wolf, Sir Bruin the Bear, Sir Tibert the Cat, and many others who mortally hated Reynard. But his height seemed to be far beyond and above their malice; which although he well knew, he dissembled all he could; and lest adverse fortune should again eclipse his Greatness, and so expose him to the mercy of his Enemies, which he knew would be but little, he plotted and devised with himself, which way he

might win their favour, and make them more fast friends to himself, than they had been Enemies. To accomplish this, his subtile wit could find out no better way than to endea-

endeabour their promotion as near as might be, with safety to his own Grandeur; for he was not ignorant, that if their advancement should come by his means, all malice and inveterate hatred would be turned into love; and he himself should be most firmly rivited in his Greatness and Honour. Therefore he waited on the King with all diligence, but conceals his intent for some time, until once on a day, the King being disposed to hunt, commanded the Lord Reynard to attend him; who very readily obeying, hunted with the King until dinner-time; but when the King had dined, Reynaad also after him: The King (in a melancholy posture) sitting on a green Bank, held down his head, but spake not at all; Reynard, seeing the King sit thus dejected, Most dread Soberaign, how is it that your Majesty, who even now was chearful and in health, dining as heartily as any Prince in Christendom, is become so sad and disconsolate suddenly? Oh, said the King, my trusty friend Reynard, when I consider the State of my Realm, how discomposed it is, how great the hatred and malice of my Subjects is one against another, especially of my Lords against you, whom I love so dearly, and see not which way to gratifie them, without displeasing you, I cannot chuse but be sorrowful and dejected. To this, the Fox replies (being glad at his heart that opportunity was offered to effect his before intended design), Most mighty Prince, I am your Vassal, therefore let not your Majesty stick to displease and ruin me, so that thereby your peace and content may be procured. Whereat the King, looking somewhat more chearfully, said; Why Reynard, dost thou in earnest love me so well, as to be content to be ruined for my advantage? Yea, my Lord, said Reynard, I would willingly lay down my life, if your Majesty think it will be your interest. By these words the Fox had so possessed the King with a firm conceit of his Loyalty, as he thought it better to let his discontented Nobles expiate their malice by length of time, than to attempt the putting an end thereto, to the prejudice of so faithful a friend; nevertheless, knowing the deep policy of his friend Reynard, said to him in this manner;

Every subtil Politician makes not an occasion for the accomplishing his ends, but waits till occasion be offered; as is here seen by the Fox, who would not discover his intent till he saw a fit opportunity presented it self.

manner: Lord Reynard, I pray thee tell me, canst not thou devise some way to gratifie these discontented Nobles without thy own injury, or my prejudice? To this the Fox answers (bowing his Body very low), Mighty Sir, undoubtedly the matter your Majesty speaks of, may be so effected, as to bring no inconvenience on me, nor any discommodity to your self, but a benefit rather, and a continual peace, content, and satisfaction to all your most loyal Subjects. At this, the King assuming his wonted chearfulness again, asked, which way can you bring this to pass, so as all parties may be pleased, and I my self, nor you my friend, incur any blemish, since they have been so degraded, and slighted by us and you, as now we cannot well repair their loss of honour and credit with us and our Subjects; for whom the Prince disregards, the Commons will not esteem? It is true Sir, replied the Fox, but the way I intend to take, shall give a testimony of your Majesties Royal Love, Favour and Goodness, to all your Subjects in general, in winking at, and not taking notice of the errors and slips of some of the chief, and always of your Majesty's ancient Nobility; for so doing you will eternize your Name to posterity; and I also, when dead and gone, shall be commended as a Loyal Subject, forgetting anger and revenge of those, by whom I have been so grossly abused. To this the King said, if your wisdom judges the matter feasible and honourable also, propound what is to be done, and I will proceed by your advice. Worthy Sir, said the Fox, it is not unknown to you, that since the death of Bellin your Chaplain, there hath been none to officiate in the Priests office, because in him his whole family was extinct by a Law, which confiscated all his Generation to be a prey to the Bear and the Wolf for ever. And among all your Majesty's Subjects, there is not any one more learned, or more fit (though he hath been my mortal foe, which I freely forgive), than is Sir Isegrim the Wolf; for to my knowledg he hath been a Student in several Universities, and in law-practises is not a little skilled; besides he hath

sate

sate in the Chair of Physick also; which will be a great honour and profit also to him. If your Majesty will be pleased to add the title of Lord chief Prelate, and to admit no Priests under him, but what are of his Family. To this the King replies, nay Reynard, how shall this be, since Sir Isegrim is so generally feared and hated of the Commons, that instead of coming to bear him, they will all run away with might and main. It is very well thought on, Mighty Sir, said the Fox; but for this we have a remedy; so soon as he is chosen chief Prelate, he must put on Bellin's furred Gown, which he used always to wear; then the Commons will be no more afraid of him. Ha, Reynard, said the King, here is a slip in your politricks, it were better that he should put on Bellin's furr Gown before he is chosen. Certes, quoth the Fox, Princes have greater forecast than their Subjects. Yet I doubt, if any one desire him to put it on first, he will take it as a mockery, unless he be assured of the place and honour intended him. That he shall be, said the King, for I will send for him while you are present, and I will endeavour a reconciliation between him and you, and then propose the matter to him. Mighty Sir, said the Fox, if you propose not the matter first, as being my Request to your Majesty on his behalf, all endeavour of reconciliation will be fruitless; for he will be sure to revile me, and that in such wise, as I fear will further provoke your Majesties displeasure against him, and so the wished end not be answered. Go to then, said the King, I will send for him, Sir Bruin, and all the Nobles; and then in a full Council we will consult about the matter, in which Council you shall speak for me and your self, as you shall judg most conbenient: for in this meeting of Nobles only (without the Commons), Sir Isegrim needs not be spoke to about Bellin's Gown, but may take his place among us with his own Garments he wont to wear. At this the Fox making humble obeysance to the King, said, Mighty Prince, your Wisdom far exceeds our conceivings, that are of the vulgar sort. Therefore, we all should acknowledg that you are not set over us for nought, but to guide and informe,

Treacherous Subjects flatter Princes moſt.

form, as well as to rule and govern; with many more ſuch flattering ſpeeches he courts the King for the accompliſhing his own ſubtil ends, as you ſhall hear anon. The next day the King ſent Sir Firapel the Libard to ſummon all the Nobles to meet at his Royal Palace early in the morning following. According to this Summons they

came. Now when they were come to the place appointed for that meeting, the King and Sir Reynard came both together

gether among them: for they were together almost all the night before. First of all the King in friendly manner salutes Sir Isegrim the Wolf, and Sir Bruin the Bear, telling them he wondred they were such strangers, and should have been glad to have seen them ere that time. This favourable and loving entertainment from the King, raised up in them a fresh remembrance of their grievances, hoping now they had a seasonable opportunity to make their complaints, and find redress accordingly. But when the King perceived their intention, which could not but be known by those so often spightful frowns upon Sir Reynard cast from them both, which the King himself had observed; he begins thus: Loving friends, the intent of this days meeting is not to determine differences between party and party, nor is it to redress private grievances; therefore of them I would have no mention made at this time; but more weighty matter is now in hand, which concerns us all, and this is the business of Religion, touching which we have all been too remiss. When the Bear and Wolf heard this, they bowed themselves and sate down. So when all were sate, the King spake to Sir Reynard, calling him Cousin, and said, Cousin Reynard, our pleasure is, that you declare to the Assembly our full intention concerning this business. Reynard, bowing very low to the King first, afterward to the Assembly, began to speak thus.

Worthy Lords, and Subjects of the most puissant King of Beasts, be it known unto you; that our Mighty Prince, here present, did for several good Causes (as especially for Murther by himself confessed) deprive Bellin the Ram both of Life and Dignity, confiscating his whole Family to be a prey to Sir Bruin the noble Bear, and Sir Isegrim the learned Wolf, and this confiscation of body and goods to continue from generation to generation, and to descend to the families and Lineages of the said Sir Bruin, and Sir Isegrim for ever, and longer if possible. By means of this, we (with grief be it spoken), are wholly destitute of a Priest, or any to officiate in Bellin's office, and are-

are like to continue ſo, if ſome ſpeedy care be not taken. Therefore the High and Mighty King of Beaſts, our Lord and Maſter, having Princely care and affection to-

towards all his Subjects in general, and to you his Nobles in a special manner, hath thought good to call this Assembly at this time, and with your advice, and consent, to make choice of some one, that shall be judged most fit for the Priests Office; and when you here have chosen the Person, his Majesty will present him to be approved by a general Assembly of the Commons, whom he will summon together very speedily for that purpose. Having spoken this, he sate down. Then the King said; I approving of all my Cousin Reynard hath said, do heartily wish that out of you may be chosen an able and fit person, rather than from among the Commons; for should one of the common sort be advanced to such a high dignity; it is very questionable, whether he would know how to demean himself, &c. therefore I would have you to proceed to your choice of one from amongst your selves. After this, for a little space the whole company were silent, and sate looking one upon another, yet not without musing, and imagining on whom this so noble office would fall; each wishing he might be the person; the Wolf and Bear especially supposed they might have the office, the Bear because the Lord Reynard (whom he hated) had stiled him Noble; the Wolf, because he was termed Learned, undoubtedly believed he should be chosen: so the wrath and choler of both was somewhat abated, and Sir Bruin first stood up and said: Most mighty King, we your Loyal Subjects cannot but acknowledg your Majesties undoubted care and zeal for the well being of all you leige people, therefore must needs greatly approve of your high and noble intention, so amply and plainly delivered by the noble Lord Reynard. Next spake Sir Firrapel the Libard, and said the Office intended to be conferred this day is Noble, and the person fit for the management thereof should be honest, wise, and also learned; therefore I hope it will be conferred on such a one, and on no other. For my part I know my own incapacity, therefore do not in the least desire it; but were I fit for it, I would chuse it above all dignities in the world. Then the King said to Sir Isegrim, how is it Sir Isegrim, that you are so silent?

The hopes of honour and profit pacifieth the minds of malicious persons; especially where their advancement is procured by such as they mortally hated.

silent? I am informed by my Cousin Reynard, that you are a great Scholar, very wise and learned in Law, Divinity, and Physick, therefore I hoped you would have proffered to take on you this great charge, which I, my Cousin Reynard, and all my Nobles (I suppose) will freely confer on you, and on no other. Now the Wolf, greedy enough of honour, perceiving, that by the Lord Reynard's means he was likely to be greatly honoured, stood up, and after obeysance made, thus spake:

By the Wolf here is denoted greedy and unsatiable men.

Most puissant King, the cause of my silence was not because I was unwilling to undergo any charge or trouble for the good of your Majesty and whole Kingdom, but because I was ashamed of the discord that had been between my Lord Reynard, my self, and some other of your Loyal Subjects, about matters not worthy to be mentioned in so noble an Auditory; for that cause only was I silent. Whe, said the King, remit and forgive all that hath passed between my Lord Reynard, Sir Bruin, your self, or any other, and will have no more mention made thereof. My Lord Reynard hath highly commended you to me, which surely no enemy would do. He hath also praised Sir Bruin so, as I will not forget to honour him also. And for Sir Tibert, because he is swift of foot, and fit for imployment, also politick and subtil, I (as soon as opportunity serves) will think of some office wherein he may benefit himself, and please me.

With these words they were all highly contented; the Wolf gave his hand to the Fox in token of friendship; the Bear and Cat also shook hand with the Fox. After these Ceremonies were passed, they all sate down. And by a General Vote, Sir Isegrim was chose chief Prelate.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How the Fox adviſed the Wolf and his Children to wear *Bellin*'s Gown, and the cloathing of *Bellin*'s kindred.

THE Fox and Wolf being thus reconciled, held a counſel together how they might ſtrengthen each other in the power they had thus obtained. The Fox begun his diſcourſe in this manner: My moſt dear Uncle, I remembring the wrong I did you more than once, and now by the Kings favour having an opportunity to recompence you, and my Couſin Bruin, but you eſpecially, I think I have done it to purpoſe. You have indeed, good Couſin, replied the Wolf, and I e mine ſhall always acknowledg our ſelves beholding to you, not only for the time preſent, but ever after during life. But how I ſhall paſs the cenſure of the Commons I cannot tell. Tuſh, ſaid the Fox, let me alone for that, do but follow my advice, and all ſhall be well: your advice Couſin ſaid the Wolf, that I will as long as I have breath. Well then, quoth the Fox, do thus; firſt of all, trim your ſelf handſomly, then take Bellin's furr Gown, and make it as fit to your body as is poſſible, that head, ears, and all may be covered; having done this, thoſe Beaſts which before hated and fled from you, will now follow, love and adore you, eſpecially if you under that garment conceal your own churliſh nature; pardon me Uncle, that I ſpeak ſo. Good Couſin, ſaid Sir Iſegrim, think not that I will take offence, where I am to take advice. Well then, if it be ſo, ſaid the Fox, I will proceed further; I beſeech you good Uncle, as you love your ſelf and me, ſhew not your teeth at any time, when you are among the Commons in the day time, in the night uſe your liberty, Proviſion muſt be had. You ſpeak wiſely ſaith the Wolf, I could never have thought of all this; but good Couſin tell me what I ſhall do, when I come to ſay maſſe, the hoarſneſs of my voice will betray me. O good Uncle, ſaid the Fox, are you ſo weak as not

Covetous perſons are eaſily perſwaded to diſguiſe themſelves, and to diſſemble their churliſh natures, for effecting honour and profit.

to find an excuſe for that? tell them, to whom you are to read, that you have gotten a grievous cold. I, but Couſin, ſaid the Wolf, that excuſe will ſerve but once. My Uncle,

Uncle, ſaid Reynard, if you mean to thrive in your office, you muſt not ſtick to lye apace. Beſides you being chief, need not appear above once a year, your children, and the youngeſt of your kindred have not ſo hoarſe a voice as you; when they grow old, they muſt read but ſeldom, but now being young they will ſtand you in good ſtead, if they be exactly cloathed with the Gown of Bellin's kindred; otherwiſe Uncle all is nothing worth: and be ſure to give them the ſame advice I now give you, that is, not to ſhew their teeth in the day time, &c. Indeed Uncle, I wonder you ſhould think the excuſe of ſaying you have a cold, will not hold water; do you not well know, that the Ram's kindred have colds often, and cough much. It is true good Couſin, ſaid the Wolf, I well remember it, for when I went to hunt for any of them in the night, I uſually was directed to the place where they were by their coughing. Well then ſaid Reynard, I hope Uncle you own my Counſel as right and good. Yes with all my heart Couſin, ſaid Iſegrim: but now I think of it, you ſpeak of my Children and Kindred; I perceive not as yet that any thing was ſaid of them by the King and Lords at this laſt counſel. Uncle, ſaid Reynard, you ſeem to be very ſcrupulous, and to doubt where there is no cauſe; know you not that every Captain puts who he will in place under him, and why not every chief Prelate? Blame me not good Couſin, ſaid Iſegrim, for I fear the Commons, ſo ſoon as they hear my name, will all cry out, Not Iſegrim, not Iſegrim. Well Uncle, ſaid the Fox, if that be your ſuſpition we will ſeek ſome way to avoid what you moſt fear. I my ſelf will haſten to the King, and aquaint him what hath paſſed between us, as alſo with this moſt material cauſe of fear: and when I have communed with him for ſome time, I will requeſt him to ſend for you, then do you be ſure to come (with Bellin's Gown exactly fitted to your Body) into the Kings Preſence, and doubt not but the ſucceſs ſhall anſwer your deſire. In the mean while, let us both go home to our Repaſts, and early in the Morning I purpoſe to go to the King; do you wait in readineſs at home, till you are ſent for. So the

Fox

Fox returned to his Castle, and the Wolf to his own house.

CHAP. III.

How the Fox communed with the King, touching Sir *Isegrim*'s doubt, and thereupon Sir *Isegrim* was sent for to Court, and created Earl of *Pitwood*.

EArly in the morning the Fox came to Court, and being suddenly admitted, after obeysance made, he said, Hail my Soveraign Lord. The King seeing him, looked pleasantly upon him, and said, what are you and your Uncle good Friends? Yes, said the Fox, I humbly thank your Majesty, all malice and rancor is laid aside; and all the evening last, I was instructing him how he should behave himself in this high Office your Majesty hath conferred upon him. You did well Reynard, said the King, but did you mind him of wearing Bellin's fur Gown? Yes noble Sir, said the Fox, and he is so far resolved of it, that I judge ere this he hath fitted the Gown to his own body. If so, saith the King, it is well; then there is no doubt but he will be well liked of. I have given commandment already that the heads of all the families of the Commons be summoned to appear here, after the third day now next coming. Therefore I would have Sir Isegrim be ready at the time appointed. Then the Fox said, ready he will be to be sure; and if he observe all that I advised him to, will undoubtedly gain the Commons too be on his side. Nevertheless there is one thing which troubles him, and makes me suspicious also, and that is left when your Majesty shall present him by the name of Sir Isegrim, which name all the Commons know, they immediately (not minding his Garment or Person) cry out, No Isegrim, no Isegrim. 'Tis true Reynard, said the King, this is a considerable matter, and I wish I could remedy the same. Sir, said the Fox, you may very well; for if your Majesty be pleased to honour him with the title

of

of Count, it matters not of how mean a place, he shall bare the name of that place, and not his own name any longer. Well then said the King, I will do so; here is a Wood, not far from this place, near his own house, and it is called Pitwood, that Wood I will settle upon him and his heirs for ever, and he shall be created Earl of Pitwood. Therefore send for him immediately to come before us. Then Reynard stepped forth, called to Sir Tibert, who waited in the Court, and commanded him to go presently, and bring Sir Isegrim to the Kings presence; Sir Tibert ran speedily to the House, and when he had entred the House and saw Sir Isegrim, he knew him not, until he had more strictly observed his countenance and visage, then he knew him, and said; Certes, I knew you not Sir in this new fashioned Gown; the King hath sent to speak with you presently. So away went the Wolf and Tibert the Cat to the Court. When they came there, Reynard the Fox came forth, and conducted his Uncle into the Kings presence, and said; here most noble Prince is your lately made chief Prelate, is he not very trim and neat? Yes, Cousin Reynard, said the King, I like him passing well; but had you not told me how he was dressed, I should scarcely have known him; sure his beard is shaved, or else he seems younger than we saw him last. Mighty Sir, said the Fox, I advised him to trim himself thus, judging it most conbenient; besides I have given him other particular Instructions, which I hope he will observe. Then the King turning to Sir Isegrim, said, assuredly Sir Isegrim you have found our Cousin Reynard to be your most faithful friend, not only by advising you what to do, but also informing us, how to assure and confirm that honour on you, which we and our Lords have bestowed so freely on your self and on no other; and that is, by conferring a further title of honour; that so your name (so dreadful to the Commons), may be laid aside, and your other Title (being unknown to them), find acceptance and applause with them all. The Wolf hearing this, bowed so low, as his mouth touched the ground, then raising himself a little, he began to speak in this manner:

Most

Moſt puiſſant King, how infinitely am I obliged to your Majeſty, and to the noble Lord Reynard here preſent; and that in a time, when I leaſt of all expected any favour from your ſelf, and leſs from him (whom I hated, therefore I here before your Majeſty beg his pardon), of whoſe loyalty your Majeſty hath undoubtedly had ſufficient teſtimony, otherwiſe your Princely wiſdom could not have embraced me, for which I here again humbly beg your Majeſties pardon. Sir Iſegrim, Sir, Iſegrim, you are already pardoned, ſaid the King, therefore riſe up (for Sir Iſegrim had proſtrated himſelf on the ground), and hearken to what I ſhall further ſay. I have not only pardoned you already, but I do now alſo, beſides the honour of chief Prelate, confer on you the Earldom of Pitwood, which Wood you undoubtedly know, for it lies near your Manſion Houſe; that Wood I give to you, your heirs and ſucceſſors for ever; and after the name of that Wood, ſo ſhall you be called ever after, and your old name Iſegrim ſhall be no more mentioned, but your title ſhall run thus: Count of Pitwood, Lord Paramount, and for brevity ſake, you ſhall be called, Lord Pitwood. When the King had ended his ſpeech, Iſegrim (almoſt ready to leap out of his skin for joy) knew not what to ſay, but bowing himſelf with great reverence to the King and the Fox, ſaid, he in all humility acknowledged the Kings immenſe bounty toward him, and the Foxes great love he would never forget: beſides he added, that in the exerciſe of his Function, he would ſtudy nothing ſo much as the Kings intereſt; and that of his own profit he would be always leaſt mindful, with many other ſuch like proteſtations; yet in all theſe he lyed egregiouſly, as you ſhall hear anon.

CHAP. IV.

How the Bear and the Cat offended at the great Honours of Sir *Isegrim*, conspired his death; and how the Fox pacified them till the great Assembly of the Commons was over.

When the rumour of the Wolf's great Preferments was spread among the Nobles, Sir Bruin the Bear, and Sir Tibert the Cat hearing thereof, stomached the matter not a little. And therefore reasoned among themselves thus; How much is this Caitiff, the greatest murtherer of all Beasts, advanced to Honour above us! if we suffer him to abide in this height, we must necessarily be his Vassals: besides, how great soever our grievances be, we can never find redress, because the Fox his great friend is the Kings only Favourite; so that every way we are like to suffer, not only by himself, but also by the Fox, who is now so much his Intimate, as he can crush us at pleasure; and when we would complain, the Fox perhaps will take our Petition, but the King shall never see it. Having thus reasoned, they sate silent for some time, until at length the Cat, with a courage undaunted, thus spake. Noble Sir Bruin, you are mighty, and I am crafty; it is not to be doubted, but if you and I agree together, we may acquit our selves of this burden. Well said, Cousin Tibert, quoth the Bear; if you can propose the way, I will endeavour to follow your proposal. Why, Sir, said the Cat, the way I would have you take, is this, go unto Sir Isegrim, and congratulate his happy advancement, expressing as great joy and affection as is possible, then invite him to your Castle to dinner, and when he hath dined (for I know he will eat so long, as until he is scarce able to stir) invite him to walk (telling him it is for his health) out into the Forest, where when you have him in a convenient place, fall upon him and tare him to pieces. Oh, Sir Tibert, said the Bear, I am afraid to set upon him alone, for he is devilish fierce, and for all that I know may kill me.

Good Uncle, ſaid the Cat, fear him not, I will follow cloſe after you, and when you have got him down, I will tare out his throat, I'le warrant you. Well then, ſaid the Bear, if you will be as good as your word, follow me, I will go to Sir Iſegrim preſently. So they both haſted, and got to the Wolfs houſe in a ſhort ſpace. When they were thither come, they found the Lord Reynard and Sir Iſegrim together; for they were diſcourſing about ſeveral weighty matters. The Fox obſerving the countenance of theſe two Gueſts to be filled with hatred, howſoever they covered the ſame with a diſſembled cheerfulneſs; began to ſpeak to them in this manner: Noble Friends, had I not been engaged here with my Lord Pitwood (for ſo his Majeſty will have him called ever after) I had ere this time ſent for you to acquaint you with his Majeſties royal intention concerning you both; for ſo ſoon as this great Convention is over, which now will be (as you very well know) the next day after to morrow, our puiſſant King royally intends to honour you Sir Bruin with the Earldom of the Forests, an honour which the greateſt of Subjects muſts need hold himſelf well contented with. And for you, Sir Tibert, he intends to make you Steward of his houſe; and if that like you not, he purpoſeth to command the Earl of Pitwood, here preſent, to admit you for his principal Secretary, a place of unſpeakable profit undoubtedly. When the Bear and the Cat heard ſuch mountains of Honour and Profit were like to fall in their Laps, and that ſo ſuddenly; their countenances and intentions were quite altered, and they with all due reverence ſaluted and honoured the Lord Pitwood, calling him the honourable Lord chief Prelate; and for the Lord Reynard, they told his Lordſhip they ſhould never be able ſufficiently to trumpet out his Praiſes, who had ſo highly promoted his Enemies in an extraordinary manner. After this they took their leaves, and departed far more jocund than they came.

Evil men once advanced, are mortally hated of their friends becauſe they alſo ſee no hopes of ſharing with them in honor and profit; but if once they ſee a probability of their own advancement, they flatter, and baſely crouch to thoſe whom they juſt before would have killed, as appears by this Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Assembly of the Commons, and what passed there.

THE Bear and Cat being thus pacified, as you have heard, by the hopes of great preferment, nothing could let the intentions of Reynard the Fox, in advancing his Uncle Isegrim, lately stiled Earl of Pitwood; therefore he, now fully assured of accomplishing his end, and of the further advancement of his own Grandeur, rested well contented till the morning appeared, which ushered in the day on which the General Assembly was to be held. Then early before the Sun was fully risen, he hastens to Court, not forgetting to call upon his Uncle to be ready to come with his Lineage before the King and Nobles; but his Uncle was ready ere he could come to his House, yet all his Lineage (according to Reynards advice) were not together; therefore the Fox said, Dearest Uncle, I am glad to see you and yours in so good forwardness, I hope we shall see your whole Family together by and by. I will go first to Court, do you come after as soon as you can. So Reynard delayed not, but went immediately to the Court, and saluted the King in these words, Most Puissant, most Heroick, and most mighty Prince, I your Vassal, and most loyal Subject, thought my self above all others most obliged to salute your Majesty first in the morning of so happy and glorious a day, as this is like to be. Well Reynard, said the King, you are not come before you are well come. How is it you brought not your Uncle and his Family, according as you told me you would? My Lord, said the Fox, my Uncle is ready, but all his Linage were not come together; nevertheless, I am assured they will wait upon your Highness presently. Whilst he was speaking this, Sir Tibert the Cat called to the Fox, and said, My Lord, here is the Lord Pitwood come with a great Train of such Gallants as I never in all my life saw the like. So the Fox stepping forth, took his Uncle by the hand, and led him into the

Presence-Chamber; and when he had, by the Kings order, placed him in a Seat of State made for the purpose, he called in all his Lineage, who as they came in one by one made reverend obeyance to the King, and stood round about their Father's Seat. Then the King said, my Lord Pierwood, you are welcome, I am glad to see you so decently, and all

all yours here so exactly sitted with these Gowns of Bellin and his Kindred; assuredly your are greatly obliged to our Cousin Reynard for his so witty invention. It is so, mighty Sir, said the Wolf (standing up, and bowing his Head very low) I and my whole Family here present do acknowledg his great labour, and next unto the continual yielding of our Homage and Fealty to your Royal Majesty most due, we shall ever own him as our principal Patron, the Preserver of our Honour and good Name, among your Majesties Subjects in general. By this time Sir Bruin the Bear, and all the other Nobles were come. All of them applauded the Habit and Gestures of the Wolf and his Lineage. And indeed they looked so demure, that the King and all his Nobles (except the Fox only) were almost throughly perswaded they had put on Bellin's Nature with his Garment. So they being all highly contented, after a short Banquet, went forth to the Commons, who were gathered together in great multitudes in a large Meadow nigh unto the Palace. Now among that huge concourse were several of Bellin's Kindred incognito, and very many of his Friends, yet they durst not be known to be such, for fear of danger. No sooner did the Commons see the King and his Nobles walking towards them, but they all shouted, and cryed out aloud, All hail our noble King. An happy presage, noble Sir, said the Fox to the King. But when the Lord Pitwood and his Lineage came forward, clothed all in the Garments of Bellin and his Kindred, they were all amazed, some said (pointing to the Lord Pitwood) that was Bellin's Son, see you not what a comely proper person he is? Others said nay surely it cannot be so, but we rather judg it some Outlandish Beast, coming as an Embassador to our King; for look you, said they, how many Attendants he hath, all clothed in the same Livery he himself wears. But the Friends of Bellin said one to another, we wish it be not Isegrim the Wolf and his Retinue, all grand Enemies to our friend Bellin and his posterity. Nevertheless, Bellin's Kindred were all silent, for they knew him well enough, but durst not say so much. Now as soon as the King himself,

Disguises and pretences of sanctity do often deceive.

The common people generally are affected with novelties, and look more on the Habit and Gestures, than into the nature and condition of such as are recommended to them.

Reynard

Reynard the Fox, Pitwood the Wolf, and his Retinue, were ascended a Scaffold purposely made, the place could contain no more, therefore all the Nobles took their places as near the Scaffold as possible; only Sir Bruin the Bear, and Sir Firrapel the Libbard were for that day Marshals of the Field, and so had no certain place; also Grimbard the Brock was made Crier of the Court, and that he might the better be heard (his voice being not very good) was thrust up, upon the Scaffold, though there he stood in little ease. Thus all things being ordered, as well as was possible among so many Beasts; the King gave a sign for silence, by laying his hand upon his mouth; then the Brock (according as he had been before instructed) by three O yes's, commanded silence upon pain of imprisonment. Silence being made, the King rose up, and bowing his head a little, began to speak thus. My friends and subjects, I called you together this day about an exceeding weighty matter. It is not unknown to many of you, that we removed and displaced, and for a known and notorious Murder, put to death our late Chaplain Bellin the Ram, and condemned his posterity for ever. Since which time I have not only been without a Chaplain, but you also have been destitute of Teachers, because all my Chaplain's kindred were also displaced and condemned for his enormous Crime. Therefore to remedy this Grievance, we with the advice and consent of our Lords here present, have made choice of a very worthy and highly learned person now standing next our own person, of whose integrity and worth we have had sufficient and very ample Experience. This person with his whole Lineage we recommend to you to be Priests for you and all our leige People throughout our Dominions. Having said this, he sate him down.

Then Reynard the Fox rose up, and after he had with a great shew of courtesie bowed himself to the Assembly; he began to speak thus, Worthy Sirs, his Majesty, our Royal King, taking care of the well being of all his subjects in general, could not without grief think of the sad deplorable state you all have been left in since the

Death

Death (* Oh it grieves me to speak it!) of Bellin, and downfall of his Posterity; therefore he in his Princely wisdom (for Princes certainly are far wiser than their Subjects) hath thought of a most excellent expedient to prevent the enormities you were too-too apt to run into, for want of Teachers and Guides to direct you better: Therefore he advised with this incomparably learned Lord Pitwood, requesting as far as beseemeth the Majesty of a King to request him, for the good of himself and all his liege people, to improve his great Learning to the general good of us all. This Noble Lord, was so far from excusing himself, and avoiding, or shunning this burthensome office, as he readily & cheerfully accepts of the same, and not only so, but also promiseth to engage all his Lineage (little less learned than himself) in the same Offices and Employments. We the Lords, being then all present and setting in Council by his Majesties command, seeing his great readiness and alacrity, and also knowing how conducent it would be to the well being of all, could not chuse but (by our joint consent) vote him to be the Lord chief Prelate throughout all his Majesties Dominions. Thus was he, not without mature deliberation, chosen by us, and the choice confirmed by the King himself.

* The true Emblem of an Hypocrite.

Before he had ended these words, there was heard a rumor among the multitude, which at length grew louder and louder. Then the Fox feared some one or other had descried the false mask he (with his greatest cunning) had put upon the business. But, after silence was commanded, it proved not altogether so. For among those who stood furthest from the Scaffold, there were some who asked, what Lord that was then spake: which question made the greatest part of the By-standers to laugh, supposing it not possible for any of the Company not to know the Fox. This noise being heard among themselves others that stood farther off, made them also to ask one another, what the noise meaned; they that stood nearest the Scaffold were most of them Bellin's friends, who had placed themselves there, on purpose the better to descry the Lord Pitwood's person (as he

Mistakes in a multitude, do sometimes give opportunity to the Judicious of making their minds known.

Subtil Politicians whensoever they fear a discovery of their false Paints and Disguises, immediately betake themselves to lying and smooth words full of guile.

be was called) whom they plainly knew to be Negrim the Wolf, therefore presently, being asked by the Crier what the noise meant? they said, the Company behind desired to know, of what Country the Lord Pitwood was, some of them supposing, others affirming they had never seen him before, and therefore were not willing to have a Stranger imposed upon them. The Fox hearing this, again bowed himself to the Company, and said: Loving Friends, and fellow Subjects, I marvel not, that it is supposed by some, and believed by others, that this honourable Lord Pitwood here present, is a Stranger or forreigner; because he indeed all his life-time, with his whole Family and Lineage, hath lived a life so obscure and secret, as never did any Monk in a Cloyster like more retired; besides he is so holy and devout, as the like of him is not to be found in the whole World: Moreover he is so silent, and of so few words, so humble, gentle, affable and kind, as I know not whether any mortal wight living may be compared unto him. And that is the reason he is so little known; for had he discovered himself before the King by his Princely Wisdom took notice of him, undoubtedly none of you would in the least have suspected him to be a Stranger.

The most ignorant most readily assent to what they understand not.

But this your suspition had indeed ground enough, therefore his Majesty is not in the least offended with you, but wills that you give your Approbation by holding up your right Hands.

Then the greatest part of the Assembly held up their right Hands, and many that scarce heard what was said, held up both. After this, Pitwood the Wolf and his Lineage bowed themselves to the Company, but spake not a word, least their Teeth should be seen. When this was done, the King willed the Fox to speak to the Assembly (before they were dismissed) about Pitwood's Lineage. Therefore the Fox standing up again, said, His Majesty is highly pleased with this your Approbation, and commanded me to thank you all: His further pleasure is, that the Lord Pitwood's Lineage be recommended to you for your

you assent for confirming their Offices under himself, now Lord chief Prelate; as to these persons, in declaring the wrath and gardness of their Father, I have not detracted any thing from them; for they all have led the same life with him, have been always under his Tutelage, and still will be under his Gobernance; so, as although any of them should by reason of his Youth err, yet his Father will quickly espy it and reclaim him; therefore I think you cannot do better for your selves, nor better please the King's Majesty, than to discover your assent by holding up your hands. Then, as before, the greatest part held up their hands; and Pitwood and his Lineage also bowed themselves again, but spake not. When this business was so well effected to the great content of the King and Nobles, but especially of the Fox and Wolf; It was thought convenient to dismiss the Commons. Therefore Grimbard the Brock was commanded to intimate so much to them, which very formally he did; first by three Oyes's commanding silence, afterward by speaking to the Assembly in this manner.

Our Puissant King and all his Nobles give great thanks to you all, for your so ready attendance this day, and also for that you have so cheerfully assented to what was proposed; therefore for your better commodity, and that you may with greater ease journey to your own homes, his Royal Majesty and all his Noble Lords here present have commanded me to dismiss you, and you are dismissed for this time. Upon this the Assembly brake up, some greatly contented, others doubtful, and not a few plainly sorrowful for what had passed. When the Field began to be emptied, and it was thought there was way enough for the King and his Nobles to walk to the Palace: The King first descended, after him the Lord Reynard, then the Lord Pitwood and his Lineage, with such seeming soberness, as many of the Commons that stayed to see the sight, admired the gravity of him and his. The Fox observing the Lord Pitwood was gazed upon, stept a little back, and walked directly before him bare headed; the Bear and Cat seeing this, placed themselves on each side of him

Knaves and Fools (the first for self-ends, the last in imitation) honour the unworthy, & most wicked.

likewise bare headed; after him followed his Lineage all in order, and after them the Nobles, and lastly Grimbard the Brock, leading a great Troop of Serbitors, that attended on the King and Nobles. In this Equipage marched they, till the King was ready to enter his own Palace; then did the Trumpets sound, and all manner of other Musick was heard in a melodious manner, constantly playing until all the whole company was entred the Royal Palace.

CHAP. VI.

How the King invited his Nobles the next day to a Feast, and what passed thereat.

When all the Nobles and their Followers were entred the Palace, the King willed them all to sit down, and told them, the business of the day holding so long, and the issue also of the same being dubious, he would not resolve what to do; but now his affairs being setled according to his wish, he desired they would all accompany him on the morrow at a Feast which should be prepared for them; and then he would further declare his mind. They hearing this, all took their leaves and departed, every one to his own home.

In the mean while the King sent out his Purveyors into all parts, who provided store of Wenison, and other Cates in abundance. When the morrow was come, and noon drew nigh, they all came much about one time: and after over sauce made, all took their places at the Table, the King sitting down in the right hand of the King, and the Wolf on his left, and all the other Nobles in order, giving place still to Pinwood's Lineage; so as they late all intermixt among them. When they were all set, the Serbitors brought in Meat, dressed in divers manners with curious Sauces, and set it before them. Grace being ended, the King cuts first of the dish that stood next him, bidding his guests to fall to. They all in like manner, lay hands

of

of what was nearest them, and soon made a clean board. Then those empty platters removed, other full Dishes, provided for a second course, were set on the Table; while this was doing the King calls to his Servitors for Wine, which was brought, and the Cup given into the Kings hand, he drank to all his Guests, bidding them welcome, withal commanding to fill unto every one that sate at the Table. This being done they fall to the second course, and then began to talk a little. The Servitors fearing by their eating so much, none would be left for them, take away the second course, and bring in the third without bidding; and as before fill Wine to the King first, and afterward to the Whole Assembly. And this order they kept in all the following courses till the Feast was done. Now when the Feast was ended, the King and all the Company looked very chearfully one upon another, and the King first of all said, How bravely did our Cousin Reynard manage his business yesterday: To this the Wolf (who during the Feast had said nothing, lest his Teeth should be seen too plainly by the Servitors) replyed, he did indeed (most Puissant Prince) act no otherwise, than as if he had been inspired by an Oracle; in truth I was afraid all would not be well when that rumour and murmuring noise was heard among the Commons. That verily put me also to a stand, said the Fox, and I was a little troubled till I heard what the matter was; then I knew I was able to put an end to that murmuring. I am glad all things are so well, said the King; it will be our parts now to endeavor to keep them so. Therefore to you, my Lord Pitwood, I now speak: I hope the Honour we have conferred on you and yours here present, will never be forgot; for whosoever is unmindful of benefits, deviates from all honesty. Our Subjects are numerous, and all of them (as I well noted) did not consent to your Approbation, though the major part (which is sufficient) indeed did very chearfully. For this cause I would have you to consider you have Enemies as well as Friends which will be apt to espy all advantages, and ready to exclaim against you so soon as they can find any occasion,

Gluttons will always eat greedily, although sitting at the table of a King.

It is honourable in a King to give good Counsell, but it is baseness in a Subject not to regard the same; as this Chapter, and the whole History following, clearly prove;

which will by nothing be sooner given, than by pride and licentious living; of which (though I thus speak) I hope I shall have no occasion to be jealous.

Then stood up Reynard the Fox, and said, Most dread Sovereign, I dare engage my honour, yea life and all, for the good deportment of my Uncle. For the reason why he heretofore was reputed churlish, and licentious, was because of his penury; this now being totally removed by the office your Majesty hath given him, can be no cause of stirring up in him such vices as were (in times past) condemnable in him: because had he now no other estate to live on than his profits (not to mention other Perquisites), he must needs have so ample a competency, as that he shall need to desire no more. Yea, I say, his riches will be so great, as he will be in a capacity rather to give to others, than to need any thing more than what his office daily supplies him with. Besides, I consider him by myself; it is well known to your Majesty, how I was continually complained of by my Enemies, accused of Murder, Theft and Rapine (as my former troubles do well witness) until your Majesty was pleased to advance me, and confer on me so ample Treasures, as I now possess. Since this time, not one Beast of all your Majesty's Subjects hath so much as opened his mouth against me. It is true, Reynard, said the King, I have never heard any complaint of thee since the time I first advanced thee; therefore I repent me not of what I have done. Then the Fox bowing himself, said, I humbly thank your Majesty for all your Favours bestowed on me, as also for this great Bounty, for my sake, conferred on my Uncle; of whom (doubtless) from this day forward, you will never more hear complaint. With this speech of Reynards the King was greatly satisfied; and therefore said, Cousin Reynard, I believe no less than you have told me. I am glad to see you affectionate and loving to your Uncle; I doubt not but he will repay your kindness with like love and affection, and in the Execution of his office be always mindful of saving our Honour. Yes, said Reynard, that will be his only aim; for he hath already promised to be always more mind-

for although here the Wolf for himself, by his silence, and the Fox for him, by a long and lying discourse, solemnly promise to observe all the King commanded, or advised to, yet they neither of them ever intended to perform the same.

mindful of your Majesties interest then of his own. These, and many more such speeches passed between the King and the Fox, until it was somewhat late in the Evening; then the King finished his Discourse, told all his Guests it was late, he would detain them no longer. So they departed; only Reynard the Fox was ordered to come to Court early in the morning; for the King told him he would speak with him alone about earnest business.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Discourse the King had with *Reynard* the Fox, touching the Advancement of Sir *Bruin* the Bear, and *Tibert* the Cat.

THE day no sooner appeared, but Reynard hasted to the Court; where his Majesty had expected his coming almost an hour before, for he was troubled about his promise to Bruin and Tibert, not yet performed, lest they through discontent should be the Authors of Commotion. Therefore, so soon as Reynard came in, he said, It is well you are come, Cousin, I was even now, and indeed last night, thinking of my promise to Bruin, and also to Tibert, how remiss I have been in performing my word, doubting whether by that omission they two being discontented (as I suppose they are) might not raise some Commotion and stir among our Friends and Subjects. Hereupon, the Fox (now finding all things to succeed according to his own desire) after obeysance made, thus speaks:

Sure, mighty Prince, you have consulted with the Oracle, otherwise you could not have conjectured so truly. For Bruin the Bear, and Tibert the Cat were highly offended with my Uncle two days before the Assembly of the Commons, and came with full intent to his house to have done him some mischief; but by good fortune, I being present, discerned their design by their looks, and therefore presently told them of your Majesty's royal intent to promote and

honour

honour them, the very next day after the Assembly of the Commons was over, which for the present pacified them very well, but since the time appointed is past and gone, without any effect, answerable to what I promised, how they now stand affected, I cannot tell. Well then, said the King, I understand by your words, that it is high time to do somewhat in this business; but I pray thee Cousin Reynard, tell me which way I may best honour them with least damage to my self, or injury to you. The Fox hearing this, after low Obeysance made, said; Dread Sobereign, if my poor judgment may be received in this case, I humbly request your Majesty to consider the nature and temper of them both, and accordingly to honour them. To this the King replied, you speak well Cousin, but since you best know their natures, I leave it to you to propose, which way they may best be honoured?

It is a point of great discretion to give honour, or choose Officers according to their Qualifications, and on active Spirits to confer active employments; but when any Subject shall perswade his Sovereign so to do, only for the accomplishing his own base ends, that is of evil consequence, and perilous to the Prince himself.

Mighty Sir, said the Fox, if it be your pleasure that I shall speak my mind, I briefly say thus. Bruin is a lump, and an heavy slow beast, one that loves to live in idleness, therefore an empty title of honour without imployment is fittest for him. But Tibert is nimble, active, subtle and politick, and therefore some stirring imployment that is profitable (for he is naturally covetous) will please better than all the honour in the world. The King hearing this, was well contented; and further said, what Title shall I give Bruin? and what Employment shall I find out for Tibert? My Lord, Bruin will hold himself highly contented with such a Title as Isegrim my Uncle hath, that is, if your Majesty will create him Earl of the Forrests, although he have not one foot of Land there, it will be as much as needs to be. And for Tibert, if your Highness will but command my Uncle to make him his Clerk (for a Clerk he must have) that will be both honour and profit also, the last of which is his chief and only aim. Then the King said, this you speak of may well be done; yet I doubt there will be an inconvenency in making Bruin Earl of the Forest, because the Forests are mine only, and in case any Insurrection be, the Rebels may

may make Bruin their head, by virtue of this Title, and ſo my Royal dignity be in danger. My Lord, ſaid the Fox (bowing himſelf) how can your Majeſty think thus? For whilſt I continue in your Highneſſe's grace and favour,

Bruin

Bruin must needs be under me, especially if this Honour be conferred on him, as for my sake, that will make him always to act by my advice, and never to do any thing without it. Besides, if he would be a Traytor, he is of himself so timerous and fearful, that he must needs bewray himself. Therefore, for him I say thus much, If ever he be found false to your Majesty, take off my Head. Well Cousin, said the King, since you have so good opinion of him, I will for your sake do him this Honour; and that I may the more firmly bind him to serve you, I will at the same time make you Lord chief Bailp of all my Dominions; only at the receiving these Honours, you shall both of you solemnly swear fealty to me and my Heirs for ever. At the hearing of this, the Fox (infinitely joyful no doubt, for by these means he knew all power would be in his hand) bowed himself to the King, and said; Noble Sir, I am not only willing to serve your Majesty in such an high and honourable office, but should hold my self well contented to be accounted your Highnesse's Vassal, since I see so great nobleness, as I am not able to express. Well Reynard, said the King, I am willing to honour you thus, because I repose in you so great trust, as I never in all my life did, in any of my Subjects; For indeed I am so sufficiently perswaded of your Loyalty, as I suppose I have no cause to doubt any Misdemeanor in you. Oh my Lord, said the Fox, should I in the least act any thing repugnant to your Majesty's honour, I should be worse than any Beast, and the most wretched of all Creatures. Then the King said; Cousin, you have said enough, I believe you. Therefore call in Sir Tibert, and I will order him to summon the Nobles to appear all here on the morrow morning betimes. In the mean while you may go home to your own Castle, until the time of their intended meeting be fully come.

The Fox hearing this, bowed his head, and departed full of joy and content; but forgot not to send in Tibert to the King. Now when Tibert came before the King, the King said, Sir Tibert, our will is, that you summon the Lords to

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be all here to morrow morning, for I purpose to confer Honours on Sir Bruin and your self, of which I would have them to be witnesses; also for the Lord Reynard's good services, I intend, and fully resolve to make him chief Baily of all my Dominions, therefore hast you, and dispatch your Business,

CHAP. VIII.

How the Fox, Bear, and Cat, were Honoured by the King; and how the Bear and Fox swore fealty.

THE Cat above measure joyed at this news, runs first to Bruin the Bear, and acquaints him with the whole story; then he hastens to all the other Lords, and last of all comes to Malepardus, where Reynard's Castle stood, into which he enters, and not finding Reynard at home, (for he was gone forth to hunt) he saluted Reynard's Wife and Children, (who were most of them of good stature) in these words: Reverend Madam, and you noble Lord, I am hither sent by the Kings Royal Majesty, to summon my Lord Reynard to the Court early on the morrow. Having said this, away he runs to his own dwelling, and there remained until morning. Now, the morrow being come, and the Lords all present in the Court, the King sitting down among them, began his discourse thus.

My Lords and Friends, We have done much toward the setling of our affairs in the choice and confirmation of the Lord Pitwood in his office of chief Prelate; yet there seems something more of necessity to be done; for Sir Bruin hath been long our leige-man, and although of so high descent, as you all know we have none nearer us by birth, except our own family, in all our Dominions, yet we have never unto this day conferred on him any singular speciment of honour. Therefore our will and pleasure now is, before you all, to create him Earl of the Forests, thereby to oblige him nearer to us, and to intimate to all our Subjects in general, that we will honour

as many, as either by birth, or desert, ought to be honoured. Also our will is, that Sir Tibert, for his diligence in executing our commands, be admitted by my Lord Kiwood here present, as his chief Clerk. We know he is able and capable of such an Imployment; therefore my Lord (directing his speech to the Wolf) I pray accept of him as your Secretary, by me recommended. To this the Wolf replied, your Majesty may command much more than this: I do here in this noble presence accept of Sir Tibert as my chief Secretary, and none other. Then the King further said, We have great reason to honour especially, who (if at any time seeing us remiss) admonish us of our duty, therefore I am now fully resolved to confer greater honour on our Cousin Reynard, the Preserver of our Royal Crown and Dignity. Having said this, he immediately before them all called to him the Lord Reynard, and when he had kissed him, gave him a staff headed with Gold; saying, this is our badg of honour, at all times to be born before you, by your Cousin Grimbard; or in case he be not well at any time, then by your Cousin Betelas the Ape, so soon as he returns from Rome, whence he is hourly expected; and with this Staff we give you power over all our Subjects, and therefore constitute you Lord chief Bailly of all our Dominions. After the King had spoke this, the Fox bowing himself, said, Dread Soveraign, I shall never be able sufficiently by words to express my thankfulness, being wholly overcome by your Majesties immense Bounty; but my Actions shall testifie my gratitude to all your Subjects. Then the King, nodding his head and smiling, said nothing to him, but called Sir Bruin, and said; Sir Bruin, I create you Earl of the Forests, and if hereafter I have so ample a testimony of your Loyalty, as I at this time perswade my self I shall, I will confirm the same honour on your Heirs and Successors for ever. The Bear hearing this, made obeysance, and humbly thanked his Majesty. To this the King said, he had reason likewise to be thankful to his Cousin Reynard, who had requested this great honour for him. Then the Bear turned himself, and gave the Fox great thanks also. This

being

being done, the King said, Now there remains nothing, but that you two swear Fealty to us, our Heirs and Successors. Then the Wolf, whose office it was to swear them) gave them the Book, on which he bade each of them to lay his right hand, and then say after him: So the Fox and Bear after him repeated these words: We swear to be true and faithful to our Soberaign Lord the King, and directly or indirectly to practice nothing against his Royal Crown and Dignity, &c. Having said this, he bad them kiss the Book, so they did, and then rose up; for they took their Oath kneeling.

Oaths taken by wicked persons, are no longer binding to them, than till they can see an opportunity of falsifying the same, to promote their ambitious intents, as by the following story is evident in the Fox and Bear, now sworn before the King.

This being done, the King dismissed all his Nobles; and to the Fox particularly said; Now my Lord Reynard, see that you deal justly to all my Subjects, in deciding their causes impartially; for I am willing you should your self redress the Grievances of my meaner Subjects; and what difference shall arise among you my Nobles and Friends, of that I my self will have the Decision. Then the Fox bowed himself, and said, All your Majesties commands shall be exactly obeyed by your most obliged.

Then Grimbard the Brock, receiving the Staff of Reynard, bore it before him; and Pitwood the Wolf, Bruin the Bear, and all the other Nobles followed after, and attended the Fox to his own Castle-gates, where they took their leaves of him, and returned every one to his own home.

CHAP. IX.

How *Pitwood* the Wolf went to *Malepardus* to commune and adviſe with his Couſin *Reynard* about his own Affairs, and what was the Reſult of that Diſcourſe.

AFter this, ſome time being elapſed, Pitwood the Wolf thought it neceſſary to go to his Couſin Reynard. Therefore coming to Malepardus, he knocked, and one of Reynard's Sons coming to the gate, opened it, and bowed himſelf to the Lord Pitwood, ſaying, My Father is within; if your Lordſhip would ſpeak with him, I will go in and call him. I pray thee do, ſaid the Wolf, for I come for that end. So Reynards Son told his Father, the Lord chief Prelate was come to ſpeak with him. He hearing this, haſted to the Gate, and there ſalured his Uncle, in theſe words, Reverend Uncle I joy to ſee you, I think it not expedient to inbite your Lordſhip to come into my Houſe, therefore we (going to ponder hedg) ſhall have a very conbenient place to ſit down and talk together; for I know we ſhall there have more privacy then we can have within doors. Honourable Couſin ſaid the Wolf, I am always obliged to you for your readineſs to ſerve me, but eſpecially for your providence and forecaſt; your ſelf being ſo circumſpect and wiſe, as to be able to foreſee conbeniency, or inconbeniency, as oft as need is. By this time they were come to the Hedg, where the Fox ſitting down firſt, inbited his Uncle to ſet by him. When he was ſat, the Fox began thus; Uncle Pitwood, I ſuppoſe by this time you perceibe the profits of your office? Yes, Couſin, ſaid the Wolf, I have indeed reaped no ſmall benefit by my office, the Perquiſites are large, and I have receibed great preſents, and thoſe of ſo great bariety, as I never in all my life ſaw the like; beſides, their quantity is ſo great, as my own Houſe will hardly contain them. I am glad to hear it, ſaid the Fox; but how fares it with all my Couſins, your Children and Nephews: do they alſo th, the

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in their offices? Yes, very well, said the Lord Pitwood, they tell me they have enough, and I believe them; for three or four of them have lately taken Surfeits with eating (poor hearts). O Uncle, said the Fox, that's nothing, perhaps their stomachs were weak; but they will be well enough in a little time. Yes, yes, Cousin, said the Wolf, I doubt it not. But good Cousin, let me have your advice in some few things. Suppose I have more than I can tell where to bestow, what shall I do with the remainder? shall I give it to the King, or build my House larger to receive all that comes, and reserve the same for a time of need? What is your advice? shall I give to the King, and so ingratiate my self further with him? Not so, said the Fox, for the King seeing your great affluence of Riches, will begin to cut short your other Revenues, supposing you will in time grow too mighty for him. That's very considerable, quoth the Wolf; what then? I perceive you allow of enlarging my house? No, said the Fox, if you will take my advice, I see no security in that, but would rather perswade you to inrich your Friends. How say you! what Friends can I have in this high estate which every one envies? To this the Fox answers, Uncle, did you ever know any one envied for giving? It is not your highestate that causeth envy; but the hatred of others against you, is because they can reap no benefit by your greatness: Therefore you cannot do better for your self, nor better secure your own Grandeur, than by pleasuring some few of the Nobles with a small part of your wealth, now and then. Well Cousin, said the Wolf, I will do so; but you must advise me to whom; for I know not what to do in such a case as this? What to do, said the Fox, why know you not that the Earl of the Forests, although mighty to see to, is but poor; and though he as yet carry fare to you and me, yet if he partake not of part of our Wealth, he may in time prove a bitter enemy? Likewise Sir Firrapel the Libbard, and Sly-look the Panther, are esteemed great, yet we well know that some small pittance from us, will be so thankfully accepted by them, as we shall ever after oblige them firmly to us. And Uncle,

This Chapter shews that Liberality is one mainupholder of Greatness, and that without it, Envy and Malice may so far prevail, as to be able to shake, if not totally to ruin those that are in great honour, and yet very covetous: Besides gifts blind the eyes and alter the understanding so, as men are easily induced to approve of that now, which they the day before did contemn as monstrous.

cle, it is a very necessary point to be thought on; for if we be diligent in obliging Friends so mighty, what is it we may not do? Yet you must be sure to be mindful of your own Servitors that they may not repine at your wealth; especially, look into your Secretaries profits; if they be not large enough to content him, you must add more, till he holds himself well contented. For he who would retain the greatness he at present hath, must not forget to reward his Attendants so, as they never utter one word in his discommendation. Cousin, said the Wolf, I well understand you, and purpose to put in practice what you have advised. So for that time they parted, and the Wolf distributed his Goods among the before recited Nobles, as freely and as liberally as ever Wolf did. And the Fox according to the advice he had given himself, did also largely reward those of whom he thought he stood in greatest need, or in time to come might have occasion to use, and in his bounty exceeded the Wolf by far.

CHAP. X.

How the Fox behaved himself in his Office, and of two Causes by him decided.

THE Fox (who knew it was no less wisdom to keep what is gotten, than to get the same) notwithstanding his other affairs, (which now by reason of his Office were many) waits and tends upon the King as formerly, always making great Protestations of his Loyalty, touching which the King doubted not at all, the Fox had so craftily insinuated himself into his affections. All being well on his side, we now come to speak of his Decision of Causes and manifest differences among the meaner sort of Subjects: And of these at this time we mention only two.

The first is of a Beber and an Otter, who being at strife about Fish they had taken, make their complaints before the Lord Reynard; the Otter first thus begins; My Lord, this

this Beber hath done me great wrong; for he and I were Partners for many years, and all the fish we got, we stored up in common, and both his and my Family were fed thereof always in our need, especially in Winter; and it happened, that this present Winter I expecting the same pet-

tledg

dledg I formerly had, came for Fish in my need, but he denyed me my right; and having all the Fish in his possession, gave me not so much as one small Fish. Therefore I am in necessity, having spent all I had to buy food for my self and family. The Fox hearing this, asked the Weber, if it were true? No, said he, my Lord, this lying beast accuses me falsly; for he and I were never Partners, except that we have sometimes gone a fishing together, and afterwards made merry with our Booty. Besides he hath not the right art of fishing, for he makes such a noise, when he is in the water, that all Fishes that are near, fly with might and main; but I leap not into the water, before I espy my prey ready and within my reach. By my discreet fishing I catch more than two for his one; therefore my Lord, it is not to be imagined that I would tye my self to so great an inconvenience as to labour for another. Then the Fox asked the Weber, if he had any store of Fish by him? and he said, No my Lord. When he heard this, he asked the Otter, what he said to that; had the Weber any Fish by him when you and he came last from home? Yes, said the Otter: Believe him not, I beseech your Honour, quoth the Weber. So the Fox straightway commanded two Officers to go to the Webers house to search for Fish. When they came there, they saw two Rooms one above another, full stored with dried Fish. The Fish being so much, as they could not bear it away at several times going; they carried none of it with them, but one stayed to guard the Fish, and the other hastned to the Court of Judicature, saying, My Lord, there is such store of Fish, as I never saw before; for in the Webers house are two rooms full, &c. When the Lord Reynard heard this, he proceeded to give sentence thus; Since the Weber hath falsly belyed his Neighbour, and denied him his just due, he shall lose all his Fish. Then touching the Otter he said, since he had been wronged, he should have one half of the Fish to make him reparation. The Otter departed well enough contented with this sentence; but the Weber was mad at heart. This Sentence was as exactly executed, as pro-

pronounced, and the Fox had as surely had half the Fish for his pains.

After this there happened a great difference between certain Daws and Rooks. The occasion take as follows. In an high Tower, appertaining to a Country-Town, where men formerly had dwelt, a company of Daws took up their habitations, and had dwelt there so long as until they became very numerous. Right against this Tower were planted Elmes, which in length of time were grown up to a very great height; in the upper part of which at first a few, and afterwards many Rooks built Nests and setled there. These two kinds being so near Neighbours, at length grew into acquaintance and familiarity one with another: the Rooks pretending great kindness to the Daws, were by them admitted into their Houses, and sometimes feasted; the Rooks likewise inbited the Daws to them, feasting them after the same manner. This reciprocal entertainment continued a long time, until a scarce and hard Season came. Then the Rooks watching their opportunity, when the old Daws were gone forth, (for it was Spring-time, and they had young ones) being greatly pressed with hunger, agreed all together to rob the Daws, and fearing the noise of the young Daws would betray their intentions, it was resolved among them, first to kill all they found in every house. With this resolution they all at once flew out, and one or two of them went into every house and slew all the young ones, some of which in carrying out they let fall, by reason of their haste; but as many as they could hold, they carryed in their own Nests, and returned immediately and took away all the Provisions they could (which was not much by reason of the scarcity of the time) and carryed that home also. Then with speed some of them flew out to purvey, as at other times, but (by reason of their own hunger) made haste home. By this time were the old Daws also returned with Provision for their young, whom they never more saw alive. Therefore smelling the deceit, some of the boldest of them flew over to their Neighbours, and coming unawares

upon them, could eaſily ſee the torn limbs of their children. Others of them flying again downwards, eſpied under the Tower-walls ſeveral of their younglings lying dead. At this, they were all ſo much enraged, as had not ſome of the wiſeſt among them diſſwaded them from it, they would have ſuddenly in an hoſtile manner aſſailed their Enemies. Therefore they took up this reſolution, namely, that they would complain of their Grievances to the King of Beaſts. But after it was told them that the King himſelf would not meddle in their matters, becauſe he had deputed his Couſin Reynard, they all fly to him, and lighting on a Tree nigh to the place of Judicature, they called aloud, Juſtice, Noble Lord Reynard. Reynard being informed of this Cry, immediately came forth, and ſitting down, ſaid, What is the matter? They ſaid, My Lord, avenge our cauſe of thoſe perfidious Rooks who have ſlain our Children, and robbed us of all our ſubſtance. To this the Fox replied, how ſhall I know your complaint is juſt, unleſs I alſo hear thoſe that be accuſed? At this, they all flew away home, and being there, called to their Neighbours the Rooks, telling they muſt appear before the Lord Reynard. To this the Rooks anſwered, that was no lawful Summons; nevertheleſs, they would not ſtick to appear, being ſufficiently able to clear themſelves. So ſome of the eldeſt of the Rooks flew firſt to the Court of Judicature; the Daws ſeeing that, made haſte after them. When both had lighted on Trees as near the Foxes ſeat, as they could, the Daws as before, exhibit their complaint. To this the Rooks anſwer, My Lord, theſe Daws here preſent, belye us ſhrewdly, for we as well as they were gone forth to purvey for Neceſſaries; but their young ones in their abſence crawled out, and fell down, and ſo died; ſome of which are to be ſeen at this preſent, broken to pieces againſt the Stones; and this is the cauſe why theſe Varlets accuſe us, who are innocent as your Lordſhip. To this the Fox anſwered, it is ſtrange that all the young ones in every houſe ſhould at one time be alike diſpoſed to crawl out; I ſuſpect the truth of this matter, and cannot acquit

guilt you, unless you can by substantial Witnesses, evidence the truth of your Assertion. Then the oldest of the Rooks said, My Lord, we are able to produce Witnesses enough, some of which saw this downfall of the young Daws. Go to then, said the Fox, produce them. Then hasted one or two of the Rooks, and in a short time produced all the rest of their fellows, who had an hand in the former Massacre of the Daws. When these Witnesses were come, the Fox commanded them down to be sworn: Therefore down they came (though unwillingly) and after they were sworn, and ready to give evidence, he would not hear them, before the other Rooks who were accused, were also come down off the Trees, and brought to the Bar. Now said he to the Witnesses, let us hear what you can say. We, my Lord, said one of them, were eye-witnesses of what happed to the young Daws; for they came all to the doors of their houses, and they looked one upon another, until at length, striving (as it seems) to fly (before they were able) they all tumbled down headlong. Now indeed, we seeing they were fallen and dead, took up every one of us one of them, and carried them home, because we knew they were dead. When these our Kinsfolks, who are now arraigned, came home, we told them the whole story; they allowed of what we had done; because that was free booty; yet to avoid the ill-will of our Neighbours, they would not suffer us to fetch up any more of their dead bodies. Now it is true, that some of the Daws flying over to us, did see many of us the Witnesses eating of the dead bodies of their Children, and therefore without one word speaking, they falsly affirmed to your Lordship that we had slain their children, and robbed them. So then said the Fox, you deny you have robbed them, yet confess you eat the dead Younglings. Now where are stolen goods to be found, but in the possession of the Thief? Therefore by your own evidence you have condemned your selves, and I can do no less in equity than to condemn you all to be strangled, as a just recompence for your heinous Massacre. When he had said this, the Fox's Attendants strangled every one of

It is dangerous for guilty persons to come within the Judg his power.

Crafty men willingly forgo, and readily give away,

them in a moments time; but their dead bodies were delivered by Tale into the Lord Reynard's Kitchin. The Daws seeing what was done, rejoiced greatly, and bowing themselves to the Fox, said, Honoured Sir, we are infinitely

infinitely bound to your Lordship, for that you have so justly avenged our cause on the Murtherers of our Children. The Fox answered, I could do no less; for I plainly perceived they were guilty, both of Murther and Theft; therefore I give you all the Houses and Goods remaining of these Miscreants, (although indeed my own Perquisites) that you may ever after live secure from such treacherous Neighbours.

what is not their own, nor ever like to be in their possession, as here is evident by the Fox, who gives the Daws the Rooks Nests, becaufe he knew not how to come at them.

Now when the Daws had humbly thanked the Fox, they took their leaves and departed; and from that day forward would never after have any FeHowship with Rooks.

CHAP. XI.

How the Fox liberally bestowed what he got among the Nobles, and of the Communication that was held by them at a general Meeting.

THE Fox in this manner handling all matters so, as which way soever the scale turned, profit should redound to him, partly by Bribes taken privily on both sides, and partly by the Forfeitures of the condemned, had got together an infinite mass of Wealth. Then knowing his own great Riches, he aspired to advance his estate yet higher, yea even above his Master, that had honoured him so highly, and had given him power sufficient to endanger his own Crown and Dignity. Therefore, to proceed surely (as he thought) to his before-imagined Grandeur, he shews himself much more liberal than formerly, enriching all the Nobles and their Followers and Kertnue, among which he most of all gratified Sir Tibert the Cat, giving to him very largely. By this liberal giving he was the only eminent person in the land (as they who were so greatly benefited by him judged) that was endued with Wisdom, Policy, and great Riches. To Pitwood the Wolf (though he had wealth enough of his own) he also forgat not to send several Presents, not once or twice, but oftner. He holding this course with the Nobles,

When aspiring Subjects abound in Wealth, the Kings royal person and power is liable to great danger.

Nobles, was not in the mean while unmindful of waiting often on the King, and with smooth words, and a lying pretence of honesty, to lull him asleep, even to a Lethargy of security; for the King being old, and hearing no complaints, was well pleased, that he had constituted a Substitute who was able and willing to free and discharge him of all trouble. Then the Fox, concealing his intent, seemingly behaved himself most uprightly; and indeed he was so circumspect as he would never divulge his mind, until he saw a manifest occasion offer it self very plainly. Some time being passed, the Nobles were all met together at the Lord Pitwood's house, to which Meeting the Fox came not, but attended on the King, whether necessitated thereunto, or purposely, is not well known. In this meeting, the Fox's great worth was highly magnified, and Pitwood himself extolled him to the skies, adding withal, that he was fit to rule a Kingdom. These words being minded by those who judged all he said to be true, spurred them on to speak disloyally of their Sovereign. Therefore Bruin the Bear backe his mind thus. He is indeed a most worthy person, and is more mindful to recompence and pleasure his Friends, than the King himself; for what gives he to any of us? If we bring him Presents, he for the present only thanks us, and afterward never more thinks of us, or our Presents; but the Lord Reynard expects no gifts from us, and yet is never weary of conferring Benefits on us. To this Bitelas the Ape assented (for he was newly come from Rome) and said, My Nephew the Lord Reynard is not only wise, but courteous, affable, and exceeding mindful of Benefits; yea, and where he neither hath, nor can expect to have reaped any commodity, there also his honesty lence is largely extended. It is true indeed, said Firapel the Libbard; and his near Kinsman, Sly-look the Panther owned as much. At length one among them said, If a vacancy should happen, shall we not do well to elect Reynard for our lawful King? Yes, said another, we may do well in so doing; but it is not time to talk of such matters as yet. No, no, said Pitwood the Wolf, we

Also the Princes security is the disloyal Subjects advantage; and whensoever any man in power is magnified (by other potent men) above his Master, and the King his after evil spoken of, actual Treason is ready to be produced, as this Chapter clearly shews.

ire shall endanger our Heads by such a discourse (as this) it should happen to come to the Kings ear. Besides, for us to imagine such a thing, before we consult with the Lord Reynard thereabout, to know whether he will accept of our good endeabours, and stand by us in it, and assist us with his wealth and friends, I judg it a very great imprudence, if not a rash and hazardous folly.

To these words of his, they all assented, and for that time spake no more thereabout.

CHAP. XII.

How *Bitelas* the Ape informed *Reynard* of all that passed at the Meeting of the Lords.

On the morrow early, Bitelas the Ape journeyed to his Nephew Reynard's Castle, and when he was let in, he spake to the Fox in this manner:

Honoured Nephew, I hear your commendations so highly commemorated, as I am above measure joyed thereat. The Nobles are all at your devotion, there is not one of them, but he is ready to hazard Life and Fortune for your further advancement: You know my meaning Nephew, do you not? Yes Uncle, said the Fox, I know it well enough; for I can step but one step higher, and I think not time as yet to begin that ascent. No, no, said the Ape, you mistake me, Nephew, if you think I mention this to engage your Lordship in any rash attempt, but rather that you knowing your Friends, may the better understand how to use them, when occasion is. You speak very well, Uncle, said the Fox. Will you do one thing for me? Yes, said the Ape, that I will Cousin, if possible. Then said the Fox, go to every of the Lords apart, and sound them, to see how they stand affected; and bring me an exact account.

So the Ape with all diligence sounded them, and found not

not one dissenting, but largely promising to hazard all to invest the Lord Reynard with Regal Power. Only he perceived that the Bear scrupled his Oath to the King; because he said, If he were but absolved there from, he would be none of the backwardest to promote this design. All this he related to Reynard three days after. Then Reynard said, smiling, Uncle you have done me a great kindness, I will repay it ere long. As for Bruin's doubt, I can easily remove it; for I am sure the Lord Pierwood will absolve both him and my self from that Oath extorted from us by the King. so soon as time shall serve for effecting this business: Yet we must not only rely on the Favour of the Lords, but by the best means we can, engage the Commons also. It is true Nephew, said the Ape; but how that will be done, I cannot tell; for if Soldiers should be listed, that would never be done so secretly, but it would be blazed abroad, and so come easily to the King's ear. No Uncle, said the Fox, that is not the way. We must proceed after another manner than visibly to raise any Soldiers: Each Lord must by promise and reward engage as many of the Commons as he can, pretending a private Quarrel, in which he would have their assistance, and therefore injoyn them to be ready armed at any time, when he shall call.

As in all Treasons, some one principal person is employed by the Grand Projector, to sound the intentions of all the Conspirators, so here the Ape is employed by the Fox to fathom the Affections and Resolutions of all the other Confederate-Traitors. This shews great craft in the Projector; for if any one had dissented, he then had a fair occasion to accuse all the other, and so clear himself.

Bicelas the Ape, admiring his Nephews wisdom, said, This is the directest way to raise an Army invisibly. To this the Fox said, if we intend to effect our business throughly, we must not visibly raise Soldiers until the hour appointed be fully come; then how squares will go we shall soon know; and if one Exploit prosper, all the other will succeed accordingly, and we shall need the fewer Soldiers. Therefore the strength of all lies in managing the business well at first: If we miscarry at first, our Design will scarcely be effected; nay, it is well if our own Ruin fall not in as an Appendix. The Ape hearing this, said, You do well Cousin to premise the worst; this seems to me a true presage of the future Event, that it will be exceeding prosperous.

prosperous. Well Uncle, said the Fox, if it prosper, and I obtain my desired end, I will honour and reward you above all others.

Thus did the Fox disloyally intend the ruin of his Soveraign, his greatest friend, to whom he had solemnly sworn fealty; but what success he had, shall hereafter be shewed.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the Discourse between the Fox and the Wolf, and of another Meeting of the Lords, and what was agreed on among them.

THE Fox, now filled with hopes of obtaining the height of all power, resolved to let pass no opportunity of promoting his design; therefore, the first leisure-time he had, he bestowed in Conference with the Wolf. Who not only promised his Assistance, but also to abolde him, and the Bear, from their Oath of fidelity. Telling the Fox, that all the Lords he was sure were like minded with him. If so, said the Fox, it were necessary, loving Uncle, to summon the Lords as privately as may be. That is done already, said the Wolf, and they will be all here by and by; but I willed the Messenger not to summon you, because I intended so soon as they were all sat down, to dispatch an Herauld presently to you. This course I thought would be best, for whosoever should at that time have been with you, they would have judged, that the King was here, and so not have offered their service to come and attend you hither, because of the haste all know you are wont to make when his Majesty sends.

By this time several of the Lords were come in, most of them entring through the back-gate, for fear of being suspected. Now as every one came in, he first saluted the Fox with great Reverence, then the chief Prelate Hegrim, lately titled Pitwood. When all were come, and each sate down orderly in his wonted place, Pitwood the Wolf stood

up, and bowing himself a little, said, My Lords, here is now present the Noble and Puissant Lord Reynard, of whom Fame hath made such a loud report &c. I have disclosed your intentions to him, and he very well approving thereof, now gives you this meeting. Then the Fox stood up and said, My Lords, and loving Friends, I am not ignorant of your affectionate desire to advance me yet one step higher than I at present am. I also am informed, that for effecting this, you will hazard Life and Fortune, (for which I give you great thanks, and will not fail to return a proportionable recompence, if ever I attain the wished end) yet I cannot understand, you have to your selves proposed what way to take to bring about your purpose. Then Sir Bruin the Bear, lately made Earl of the Forests, said, Noble Lord Reynard, we are all ready to serve you, and follow the Directions your Lordship shall think good to propose. The Fox hearing this, said, he could propose an expedient course, which being taken, would further the design, and yet not be perceived; but before he did that, he desired to be absolved from the Oath of Fealty, which he and Bruin the Bear swore to the King. The Lord Pitwood hearing this, stood up and said: I here absolve you, Lord Reynard, and you Sir Bruin, of the Oath you have taken, &c. and you are absolved. After this, the Fox bowing himself began to speak thus. Worthy Friends, it is well known unto us all, that we have need of the Commons; for as no man can work without hands, so we can never accomplish what we intend, without the assistance of many more than we our selves are. Also for procuring their assistance we must not publickly invite, or solicite any, or otherwise hire and list, as is usual in such Cases. Therefore there is but one way left us, and that is best, and will be most secure. The way is this; Let every one of us here present, by promise and reward, oblige as many of the Commons as we can, telling them we require their assistance in a private quarrel, and therefore would have them be ready (but secretly) in Arms, till we do call for them: This

way

way will both conceal our design and our selves, until we think good to disclose our selves and it. The Nobles hearing the Fox's proposal, approved thereof; and highly praising his Wisdom, said, They would put in practise what he had so prudently advised to. Then he again stood up and said, Worthy Friends, if you think good to put in practice our advice, we also judg it expedient, that all speed possible be used, because delay may produce danger; and indeed such designs as this should be as soon executed as thought on. Therefore I request you, and as Confederates adjure you to use all diligence this evening, and all day too morrow, to oblige as many as you can, and then to meet here to morrow-night, that we may determine what to do, and appoint the hour, in which we will set about the business, and dispatch it. Here it appears, that Flattery and Dissimulation are necessary concomitants of Treason: for had not the Fox waited on the King as formerly, his absence had given cause of suspition.

Having said this, the Meeting broke up, and the Lords went forth one by one, as privily as they could.

CHAP. XIV.

Also Miscreants before they attempt dangerous Designs, forecast how to secure themselves if it happen their intentions be frustrated; as here is evident by the Fox his fortifying and furnishing his Castle to abide a siege, if need as should be.

Of their last meeting, and how they determined to surprise the King and Court the next night following.

THE next day the Fox went to Court, and tarried with the King until Dinner-time; then with great submission and seeming Loyalty he took his leave of him; who doubting nothing, dismissed the Fox with great chearfulness.

When Reynard came home, he was not idle, but stayed at home all that day, not only to view the Fortifications of his Castle, (for he under pretence of repairing it, had already fortified it strongly) which he liked well, but also to examine his stores of Provision, observing what was deficient, and supplying the same that day, that (if need were) he might abide a Siege to the confusion of his Enemies, as he still stedfastly hoped. Therefore such Soldiers

as he lebied privily, he kept there, with a plentiful allowance of all that was needful.

Qui malum agit lucem fugit. Conspiracies and Treasons can at no time so commodiously be contrived as in the Night; because then Conspirators may meet together unseen, and pass away undiscovered.

Now the Evening being come, so soon as it was quite dark, he goes to the Wolfe's house, where he found all the Nobles just come in before him. He observing that not one was missing, concluded that all were right for his purpose, (as indeed they at that time were) therefore he, full of joy and content, spake to them on this manner. Worthy Friends, I am not a little pleased to see you all so unanimous. To this they all said they would live and die with him. Then he bowing himself, said, If your Resolution be such after you have declared what power you have in readiness, I will disclose my intentions, touching the time and manner of execution. As to our Power, said Sir Firrapel the Libbard, we had a general Meeting in the Forest before we came hither, because we would be rightly informed thereabout; and among us all, except only the Lord Pitwood, who was not with us, we find we are able to raise at an hours warning three thousand Soldiers. Then the Wolf said, and I, my Lord, am assured of four hundred at as short a warning. Well then said the Fox, I perceive your Loyalties, for which I give you thanks; I my self have also Six hundred Soldiers ready when I call for them. These Forces reckoned together, will amount to no less than Four thousand, a power sufficient to carry our Design through all opposition and difficulty. Having said this, he paused a little; and at length stood up again; and said, Worthy Friends, it now remains, that we fully and unanimously agree about the time and manner of executing our design. Therefore, Noble Sirs, if any of you can devise a better way for effecting what we intend, than I my self have thought upon, I would have him speak first. To this they all replied, Noble Lord Reynard, we all are your Honours Servants, you may command us, we cannot advise you; but whatsoever you shall propose, that we will do to the utmost of our power, let the event be what it will. The Fox hearing this, said, For this your Loyalty, I will reward

reward every one of you with such gratuities, as you could never expect from the present King. And, as to the time, and manner of execution, since you leave it to me, my judgment is, that the sooner the better; yet because it is necessary that our Friends and Allies, I mean the Commons by us ingaged should have timely notice to be ready; I find it is not not possible to set about the business sooner than to morrow night. Therefore I would have you, and all your Soldiers, to be ready embattelled in the Forest to morrow in the Evening, setting out spies every way to intercept all Dangers, that no Tales may be told: Then will I, when I see the time, give command for you to march. But first, I would have two or three of you, with your Soldiers, to go to the Court, and if possible to surprise the same, then by a Messenger to signifie the Surprisal thereof to us, that we may with all Forces come in immediately to repress all Resistance whatsoever that may be made by any of the King's Sons, or Kinsfolks, if they happen to escape the first comers, and should by that Alarum draw to themselves a multitude of Auxiliaries which may frustrate our intentions. For it is to be understood, that if we do not our business to purpose, we shall never long hold our gettings in peace and quietness; therefore, since I well know, that the King and his Sons be strong and baltant, I think it most expedient for you Sir Firrapel, with your Cousin Slylook, to take with you your own Forces, and such as will voluntarily follow you; and at the time I shall give command to march first (yet secretly) to the Court, and there to demean your selves right valiantly, that you may with the greatest speed, and least noise, surprise the same; above all, be sure you take care that neither the King himself, nor any one of his Children or Nephews (who I understand are all to sup with the King to morrow Night) escape your hands, but be either taken alive, or killed outright. Having said this, the Libbard and Panther stood up, promising to undertake the charge imposed on them, resolving either to effect it throughly, or to die in the attempt. The Fox thanked

Hopes of Reward and furniture advancement makes Commons bold and adventurous. Besides, all Traitors themselves are very liberal in promising as appears by the Fox, who promiseth to exceed the King his Master, against whom he conspires, and of whom he contemptuously speaks.

Evil Designs are never throughly executed without great effusion of blood; for the shadow of a man terrifies a Murtherer, especially if it be of an Allie in blood to the

person murthered; as here the Fox commands, that neither the King, nor any of his Kindred should be spared, his reason he gives before.

ed them, and added, Worthy Friends, we cannot be too circumspect, or warp in this matter; therefore I judge it fit to use one policy more, and it is this. Do you two go to the Court to morrow in the forenoon, and acquaint the King that I am gone a hunting for to recreate my self a little, because I have lately been greatly wearied with my multiplicity of business, and also that the Lord Pitwood is busie in preparing a Present for his Majesty. Then do you enquire of his Sons and Nephews how they do, and he will answer, they will all be here anon: you hearing that, may say, you will come in the Evening, and salute their Lordships. By this means your approach in the Evening will be less suspected, and your design much more easily effected. They hearing this, humbly thanked his Lordship for his singular advice, which rendred their work so easie, as they now had no doubt of accomplishing the same. Then the Fox directing his Speech to the other Lords, said, As for you my Lord Pitwood, I leave to you the leading of the Van of the Body of the Army remaining; and to you Sir Bruin I commit the Care of the Rear. I pray, my Lords, be careful and circumspect, command your Soldiers to march with Silence; so soon as you are marched out of the Forest, you shall see me with my Six hundred Soldiers. Yet I will not joyn with you, but march on one side, at a convenient distance, that I may the better observe what is to be done; and also, the more commodiously receive Intelligence, and give Instructions, or come in to rescue if need be. My Intelligencers or Scouts shall be Sir Tibert Lineage, over whom he himself shall be Captain. This is my Determination, therefore doubt him not. And although in this my charge, I have particularly spoken unto four of you only, yet (as your friend) I request, and (as your Colestrain) command you all to be prudent, and very warp in you proceedings, let each of you advise, and encourage his own Soldiers, and by your obedience to your Superiors, teach them to be obedient to your self; for thus doing, you your selves shall reap the profit, and I be the more engaged to serve you in time to come. Upon this,

this, they all again promised to hazard Life and Fortune, and to be every one (according as he should be placed that day) obedient to his Superior. After this, they depart each to his home, for by this time it was very late.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

How Sir *Firapel* the Libbard, and his Cousin *Slyslook*, revealed the whole Treason to the King, &c.

ON the morrow when Sir Firapel and his Cousin met, they both looked less cheerful than they were wont; and therefore asked each other the cause of his sadness. The Libbard first spake thus:

Relenting thoughts in Conspirators, prove dangerous to grand Projectors.

Cousin, I am troubled with the thoughts of what we are going about; for I consider we have no reason to be Traytors to our Soveraign, because he never in the least degraded or injured us, but always admitted us as Friends and Companions; and indeed he is a Prince deserving the love and not the hatred of all his Subjects, much more of his Lords, and in an especial manner of the Lord Reynard, and his Uncle Isegrim, since called Pitwood. But now engaged as we are, we are in such a streight as what to do I cannot tell.

Then the Panther said, Truly Cousin, I know not what to think, I have been so perplexed all this night with the consideration of my Disloyalty, as I am now even at my Wits end. If we bewray the Plot to the King, he is so well conceited of the Lord Reynard, as he will not believe us; and so we are in danger of death by falsly accusing him, who is the falsest of all living, and will not stick to ruin all us, so he may but escape himself. Besides, his language is so smooth, and he is so crafty and subtil, as it will be impossible to prove a tittle of all we can say against him. No, no, said the Libbard, if we having declared all to the King, request him to detain us in his Court but for one day, until our Loyalty be proved or disproved, and in the mean while not be known we have bewrayed the Plot; we when the time appointed is come, may look over the Battlements and call to Sir Tibert (who will be sure to lie very near, that he may give intelligence) telling him the King and his Sons are dead,

dead, the Lord Reynard may now come in securely; then we shall quickly see our selves out of danger, and the Authors of our trouble brought to condign punishment. Cousin, said the Panther, I like your Counsel well; but if we be detained in Court all day, and come not with our Souldiers in the Evening to the place of Rendezvouz, Reynard will presently smell the matter, and let fall his present design, but immediately run to Court and accuse us. 'Tis true, indeed, said the Libbard, we are in a bad case if we reveal the Treason, and it is very hazardous if we reveal it not, and any other do; our danger will be the greater. Therefore, since we are so straitned, it is better for us of these two Evils to chuse the least, and speedily to reveal the Treason, let the event be what it will.

To this the Panther consented; and so they went together to Court. When they were come before the King, and had bowed themselves, they thought to have spoke, but neither of them could for shame and grief. The King noting their dejected countenances, said, Friends, why are you so sad? O Sir, said the Libbard, the consideration of your Majesties clemency, and our own unworthiness, is the cause of our present grief. Why (said the King) speak you thus? Because Sir, said the Panther, we have been so unworthy, and indeed so false to your Majesty, as to know of a Treason (intended against your Royal Person, Crown and Dignity) for at least four dayes, and not to reveal it; and that which most of all perplexeth us, is that we gave our consents, and promised to aid and assist the Traytors against your Majesty.

This Chapter shews that some men are easily wrought upon to consent to Treason, yet will very unwillingly put the same in Practice; but rather, to save themselves, reveal the whole Conspiracy, as here the Libbard and Panther did

Here the King interrupted him; saying, Treason! and would have spoke more, but for rage could not at present. In a little time his wrath abating, he sternly said, Who be the Traytors? at which words the Panther and Libbard trembled exceedingly, and said, We be those Traytors who disloyally conspired your Majesties Death. The King hearing this, knew not what to say, but supposed they were mad. Therefore he again asked them; What,

do you accuse your selves, are you Traytors? Yes, we are, said they. Then the King said, would you have pardon? Yes, said they, if your Majesty so please. Pleased I am to pardon all that of themselves make complaint first; therefore I here pardon you, how foul soever the Treason be, provided you will reveal the whole Conspiracy, and Conspirators. At these words they took courage, and (after Obeysance) said, We will not only reveal the whole Treason exactly, from point to point as it is; but will also (if your Majesty will act by our advice) deliver all, or most of the Traytors into your own hands, to deal with them as your Highness shall think fit. Well, said the King, first let me know the Conspiracy, and Conspirators.

So they in all points declared the whole Treason and Traytors, from beginning to end, as you have heard. Then the King said. How say you, all the Lords? Yes, Sir, said they, from the highest to the lowest, there was not one that consented not. It is true indeed Sir Tibert was not at our Meetings, but he must needs be privy to it; for he is made Captain of the Scouts that are to go before the Army; and undoubtedly he may be seen in or about the Court this night, if a diligent search be made for him. The King hearing this, was above measure troubled, and would often have sent for Reynard, had not his eldest Son, and his other Friends present perswaded him to the contrary; saying, We have often heard your Majesty say, you have twice saved Reynard from death, and that his Loyalty of late had so far repaid the Recompence of all his former Misdemeanours, that you had no cause to repent of all, or any of your labours. Hath it not been too too often seen, that some who receive greatest Benefits, are most ungrateful to their Benefactors? And is there not a Proverb, Save a Thief from the Gallows, he will hang you if he can; all this is true, said the King, but sure our Cousin Reynard is not a Traytor. To this, his Son and Friends said, Sir, while your Majesty is of this mind, the depth of this Treason can never be sufficiently known; for if Reynard be sent for, he will deny all; and if he be guilty, as we believe

he

he is) accuse others most maliciously, and so (if your Majesty give credit to his words) escape himself, and another time put that in practice effectually, which now (we have good reason to hope) he can never be able to accomplish. With these and the like words, the King was withdrawn from his intent of sending for Reynard the Fox. Therefore he turning to the Panther and Libbard, said: Which way can you enervate this Treason, and deliver the Traytors into our hands? They answered, My Lord we think it not possible to deliver Reynard himself, because he already intends to come last; and in surprisal of the other Lords, some one or other of Tiberts Lineage will enter in among them, and then seeing what is done, acquaint Reynard therewith; but for most of the other Lords, we may make sure of, before any thing of our intent is perceived, if Tibert, who will be sure to come this night, enter not with us into Court. For if your Majesty will be rightly informed by the effect, and be resolved to take your Traytors acting their Treason, we must have leave to depart and go to the place of Rendezvouz at the time appointed to meet the Soldiers by us levyed, which will be near six hundred; with these Soldiers we (with your Majesties leave) will enter the Court, and lest Tibert should discover our intent, will counterfeit a fight, as against your Majesties Guard, and then rushing in, will by and by cry, all is our own. When this is done, one of us will call to Tibert, and send him away, telling him we have slain all the Fox ordered should be slain, and charge him to make haste. Thus we shall accomplish all things well; and undoubtedly, before intelligence can be given to Reynard, intangle most of the Nobles in their own Net.

A well meaning man can not easily be perswaded to entertain bad thoughts of any one, that hath formerly been his friend; as appears here by the King, who would not believe that *Reynard* was a Traytor, &c.

The King liking the project, consented to their departure; and so soon as he had dismissed them, he consulted with his Friends what to do; they advise him to double his Guards, and to call in as many of his Friends as could be called in so short a time: but that all might be kept secret, not to acquaint them with the present danger. The King did all things as they advised, and ordered all private Ave-

Here is also shewed how necessary the advice of Friends is, in a time of great danger.

nues belonging to the Court, to be ſtopped leſt Tibert or any of his Lineage ſhould enter thereat.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

How the Forces of the Lords met at the place appointed, and how *Firrapel* and *Sly look* entred the Court, and ensnared most of the Confederates, and among them *Tibert* the Cat.

SIr Firrapel the Libbard, and Sly look the Panther, were no sooner gone from Court, but they hasted all they could to Reynard, who was at home waiting their coming: for the whole hinge of his business depended on their Intelligence, how squares went at Court. When they came near his Castle, he came forth and met them, and said, My noble Friends you are welcome, how is it you staied so long? To this they answered, Most excellent Lord Reynard, after we had spoke unto the King according to the Instructions we received from your self; he entertained us with a large discourse of your Merits, telling us how highly he was pleased with your Lordships great diligence, by which he could take his pleasure without fear or care, adding many such like expressions too long to be now recited: we were constrained to stay by this occasion, otherwise we had waited on your Lordship sooner. All is well, said the Fox, you are come soon enough. I would have you now to mind your lives, and see your Soldiers be all well armed, for fear of the worst, because you know, it is ordered that you give the onset. To this they replyed, My Lord, we are ready to obey your command, and so they departed about their Levies, but not with the same intent as Reynard supposed. So soon as it began to be dark, the Soldiers in Troops repaired to the Forest, where their Lords were ready to attend them; and when they were all come, they embatteled them as soon as was possible. Reynard's Espial giving him intelligence they were all ready, he gave command for their March; accordingly Sir Firrapel and his Cousin Sly-look marched out with their Six hundred Soldiers, having not many Volunteers out of the other Companies, because each Lord strobe

to

Here is Treason repaid with Treachery.

to have most Soldiers. Reynard met this forlorn Hope, and saluted the Leaders very courteously, but spoke not loud. So on they march until they come to the Court-gates. When there, they stand a little and make a pretended scuffle with the Kings Guard, who well knew the Kings mind, and so resisted but coldly. But before Sir Firrapel was entred himself, he charged Tibert the Cat to wait in one certain place without the gate, that he might the better inform him how squares went; and he, when it was time to be gone, have no let; withal charging him to command his Soldiers to lie close round about the Walls of the Court, that if called to on any side, they might presently be ready to run and give intelligence. Tibert did as he was commanded. Now when Sir Firrapel and his Cousin Sly-look, with all their Soldiers were entred, and had stayed within some small time, Sir Firrapel failed not to call to Tibert aloud, saying, the day is our own, haste quickly and tell our Lord Reynard, that all are dead whom he commanded should be killed. Tibert hearing this, sent two of his Soldiers to the Lord Pitwood, who was not far with the whole Army, to tell him the Newes; but ran himself to the Lord Reynard, and said, Most noble Lord, your renowned Captains Firrapel and Sly look have fully executed your Lordships commands, and all your Enemies are dead; this they bade me tell you. The Fox hearing this, said, It is good News indeed, if it be true: True, Sir, said the Cat, I'le warrant you. Nevertheless the Fox like an old Soldier would not believe the first report, but sent away Sir Tibert, commanding him to enter into the Court, if possible, and then to tell him what he knew. In the mean while, Reynard commanded Pitwood the Wolf to march up to the Court-gates with the whole Army embattelled as they were, and then to make a stand, and call to him all the Commanders to advise what was fit to be done, still (as before) wishing him to proceed warily, and to be well informed, before he attempted any thing. But the Wolf being over-credulous, and above measure joyful at the News he had heard, forgat all counsel of warines. Therefore, being come

Politick persons believe not reports by Hear-say, but require a Testimony from sight.

come up, he found Sir Firrapel, and his Cousin Sly-look, standing without the Court-gate, with all their Soldiers ready embattelled within. At this sight, he was confirmed in his former conceit, and therefore stepping a little before the Army, he saluted them, congratulating their prosperous success. To this they answer, We indeed, noble Lord Pitwood, did at first find some resistance, but our Soldiers couragiously fighting, soon overcame the Guard, and then the King and his Friends were without difficulty dispatched. Now my Lord, if it be your pleasure to walk in, and if your Honour will send for all the Commanders, we may the better consult what is fit to be done within, when we are all together; and besides here is store of Provisions which were left of the Feast. Here the Wolf interrupted; Provisions Sir, said he! I am in truth very hungry, having walked about all this night; and with these words proffered to go in. Then Sir Firrapel said, I beseech your Lordship first to command the Army to stand still embattelled as they are, and then to send for Sir Bruin, and our other noble Commanders; otherwise if your Lordship only enter your self, the other Lords will suspect some Treason is plotted by us, and so an irrecoverable distraction and danger will follow. It is well considered, Sir Firrapel, said the Wolf. So the Wolf presently commanded the Army to stay and rest themselves there, where they were, but that the Commanders should all repair unto him, now gone into the Court. Which order was scarcely well understood before the Wolf was entred within the Court-gate, he was in such haste to fill his belly, as he supposed he should. Now with him Sir Tibert would have entred, but the Soldiers diligently watching on purpose to prevent him, (for they had order so to do) put him by, saying, he might come in anon after the Nobles, adding also this, Here is not so much room within as to let in every one that comes. So Tibert waited till all the Lords were come to the Gate, and seeing the guard of Soldiers to open themselves to make way for them to come in, advised a Nephew of his to enter in at one side of the Gate, and slip between the Soldiers legs, and

Covetous and greedy minded men, forgetting all good and wholsome counsel given them rush headlong upon their own ruine, where matter of profit is strewed as a bait.

and so get in. His Nephew did so, and was in. Tibert himself walked under Bruin's belly, and so was admitted unespied; after Bruin the Bear, all the other Commanders walked in, not one was missing, except Bitelas the Ape, who was gone to his Cousin Reynard; whether sent for by him, or because he suspected the Treachery, is not known. When all were within, the Court-gates were shut; and all the Lords were immediately laid hold of, and secured; also Tibert the Cat with them; but his Nephew seeing what was done, in great fear leapt over that Soldiers head, who would have taken him, and so escaped: Sir Firrapel understanding that Tiberts Nephew was gone, knew it was high time to disperse the Army. Therefore he with four hundred Soldiers sallyed out upon them, charging them (who were before disordered in so furious a manner as most of them fled, leaving their Arms behind them; many of them were taken Prisoners, and sent into the Court; but some few escaped and ran to Reynard's Company.

CHAP. XVII.

How the Fox consulting with his Uncle *Bitelas* the Ape, returned to his Castle, and dismissed part of his Soldiers.

THe Fox greatly perplexed at the ruine of his Army, of which he was too too surely informed by the Run-aways, and having just before understood how all the Nobles were betrayed, he was almost at his wits end. Bitelas the Ape seeing his Cousin Reynard so exceedingly overcome with grief, said, Cousin, it is not the first time you have been in danger, and yet have overcome all difficulties, why not now? Ah Uncle, said the Fox, there is a vast difference between what I then was, and what I am now, or at least was but three hours ago. And I too well know, that the greater any one is, when he falls, his fall is so much the more dangerous. Before I vexed some few only, and those not considerable persons,

persons; but now I have displeased the King himself, and all his most intimate friends; therefore I must needs be utterly undone. But Cousin, said the Ape, have you not made some Provision before hand to secure your self in this time of need? For every one that is wise, will always provide for the worst. Yes Uncle, I have done as much as could be, for I fortified my Castle long before, and have stored it with all sorts of Provision: but yet I am in a very great strait: If I draw all this Company into Malepardus after me, their number is so great as I shall not be able to hold out a long Siege, especially if all the private Avenues of my Castle be stopped up, as they will to be sure, if the King with his Forces shall come to sit down before it. For so soon as I, or my Soldiers shall be restrained from forage, so many mouths will quickly devour all. And if I draw not in with me a sufficient number to make sallies out upon mine Enemies, then they will adventure to storm or blow up my Fort, and what shall become of us then? Truly, it is an hard case Cousin, said the Ape, but cheer up; and first of all withdraw from this place, leading the Kings high way, and betake your self and Soldiers to Covert, in some by-Lane, that if the King pursue, he may not find you. Thus doing you will have some respit to determine of your March. According to the Ape's advice, the Fox withdrew into a by-Lane with all his Soldiers. Then his Uncle again said to him, Now Cousin you need fear no surprisal, at least for an hour or two. If you like not to hasten to your Castle, and there to abide the brunt, what is your determination? I cannot at all judg it safe for us to go to the King, especially whilst his rage is at such an height, as it must needs be at this time. Therefore I judg, nothing will conduce more to our security, than to protract the time, the best way we can. Indeed Uncle, said the Fox, I think it will be best to do as you say; but the many mouths we have to feed, will endanger all. Why Cousin, you have a remedy for that. Know you not that three or four hundred in a Fort, will be able to resist ten thousand in the Field. Yes Uncle, quoth the Fox, I well

Great disasters astonish the most politick, especially when the knowledg thereof comes unexpected; as here is seen in the Fox, who although before never had a shift to seek, yet now is so confounded, as he knows not which way to turn himself.

well know it; yet I would have more than three hundred; yea more than four hundred Soldiers, if I were sure not to be block't up too suddenly. Cousin, said the Ape, you must determine somewhat speedily: Be ruled by me, I pray, chuse out the weakest of your Soldiers and dismiss them, and retain none with you, but such as are stout and resolute Warriers. To this the Fox hearkned, and presently discharged three hundred and odd of the weakest, but the strongest with him were near four hundred; his Army being increased by the Run-aways who were retained still with him; and because the night was far spent, and he durst not abide where he was till day-light, he by a swift march came to his own Castle by break of day.

CHAP. XVIII.

How the Fox was pursued, and many of his Soldiers that he dismissed, taken by the Pursuers.

When Firrapel the Libbard, as afore shewed, had routed and dispersed the Army that lay before the Court, not long after it was thought convenient to send out other fresh Soldiers, in pursuit of the Fox and his Company. The Leader of these fresh Soldiers was one of the Kings Friends, that supped with him that night. He having no guide to direct him where to find the Fox, bade his Soldiers to lie in wait for strag'lers. So they did, and in a short time one of them laid hold of one of Tiberts Lineage, and cried out a Spy, a Spy; the Captain hearing this, said, bind him and bring him hither: When he was brought bound to the Captain, he asked him what he was: he told him, he was one of Sir Tiberts Kindred. Well then, said the Captain, go along with us, and shew us the place where that Trapterous Lord Reynard is. So on they went with this their Guide to that very by-Lane in which Reynard and his Uncle Bitelas had been, but were gone. Then he again examined the Guide, if he knew not where they were gone. The Guide told him, whither they were

were gone he could not tell, for whilst they were with their Soldiers in that by-Lane, he was sent out with several others to lie as near the Court, as they could, to give notice if any marched out to attaque the Lord Reynard. And that he having lain thereabout, did at length return to that place, but found neither him, nor his Soldiers, except some few that were dismissed by him, as they said, and were going to their own homes. Which way went they, said the Captain? this way Sir, said the Guide, (pointing westward from the Court) and if you hasten, you will overtake them, for they go not fast. The Captain having this intelligence from the guide, commanded his Soldiers to follow close. In a little time they found two or three, and passing further on, found several others by threes and fours in a Company; this course they held till they had gleaned up almost an hundred. Then the Captain fearing to be over-burthened with too many Prisoners, gave command to pursue no further. So he with these Prisoners hasted to the King, but he had marched out so far in pursuit, as it was Sun-rise ere he came to the Court.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Examination of the Traytors and Prisoners.

When this Captain with his party were come into the Court, and the King by him understood that Reynard was fled: He then, fearing no Enemy, commanded his Purveyors to bring Provision in abundance, that he and all his Friends might eat and be merry. The Purveyors made ready as soon as was possible, and the King and all his Friends dined very chearfully; after this the Serbitors dined, and what was left was given to the Captive Prisoners; but the Traytors all this while had neither eat nor drunk. Therefore the King commanded, that what the Prisoners left, the Traytors should have divided among them. This was done accordingly, and they had no more, any of

them except Tibert, who by good fortune had a Mouse given him by a certain Soldier, who found it dead and trod on in the Court. This present was so thankfully accepted by Sir Tibert, as he promised to requite him who gave it with a greater Booty, if ever he had his Liberty.

When the King and his Friends had dined, as we said; The King looking on Sir Firrapel and his Cousin Sly-look, said, Now my Noble Lords, I perceive you have told me a truth, you have in very deed convinced me of that which I could not otherwise have believed, although my incredulity had cost me my life. I thank you both for your Loyalty, and all you my Friends for your faithful advice and assistance. Now I judg it convenient that we first examine the Prisoners, and afterward the Traytors; that if we find any not guilty, we may dismiss them. Then Sir Firrapel stood up and said, Noble Prince, I do verily believe that all the Captive Prisoners are not guilty, for they were led by their Lords, but about what they could not tell, as by Examination your Majesty will clearly find. Well then, said the King, let Reynard's Soldiers be first called. So when they were brought before the King, his Majesty asked them, how they durst take up arms against himself? Some of them answered, they were hired Soldiers, hired by the Lord Reynard, and by him led forth the last night; but about what, or for what cause, they never knew, till some of the other Lords Soldiers run in among them, saying, the whole Army was either killed, or taken; then indeed (said they) we mistrusted we were led against your Majesty, but yet of that could not be assured, because those that fled from before the Court-gates unto us could not tell who were their Enemies, only they said, they who set upon them came all out at the Court gates. The King hearing the simplicity of their answer dismissed them, and all the other Prisoners, strictly charging them to be ready at his Summons, when he thought good to hunt the Traytor Reynard. They all bowing themselves promised they would courageously fight against the Kings Enemies. So they all departed safely to their own homes.

This

This being done, the King said, Now my Friends, I perceive that this is Reynard's work, it is managed so craftily; for I plainly see, that not one of the Commons is guilty of this Treason, because they knew not what they went about. Therefore let the Lord Pitwood be first called. So Pitwood was brought in before the King and his Friends, with Bellin's Gown on his back, quaking and trembling: The King no sooner saw him, but he sternly said, Pull off the Villain's disguise, that we may see him, as he is. Then did Sir Firrapel and his Cousin Sly-look, immediately tear of Bellin's Gown, and when all the Company saw it was Isegrim the Wolf, they laughed heartily. As soon as they were all silent, the King said, Thou wretch, what moved thee to conspire my death, who from a low and vile estate advanced thee to so great Honour? Is Treason Religion? Or, is Murder and Treason virtue in a Priest? At these words the Wolf was so frighted, as he pist for fear. At length he said, The Lord Reynard gave me presents often, and often spake to me, that I should commend him before the Lords, at length perswade them to establish him in the Royal Throne. And was that all said the King? Yes, all indeed Sir, said the Wolf (and then pist again) except that we must with hired Soldiers (who must know nothing before-hand of the Business) come hither and kill your Majesty and all the Royal Family, and then set the Crown on Reynard's Head. Enough, enough, said the King. Take away the Villain, and chain him to a stake, and so keep him with bread and dirty water until I call for him. So the Keeper who had charge of this Prisoner, took him away, and bound, and fed him, according to the Kings will.

Then the King called for Sir Bruin the Bear, who was immediately brought and examined, and after Examination was found to acknowledg himself guilty of the Treason; only he pleaded, the Wolf and the Ape instigated him thereto. So he was taken away and bound, and fed as the former. After him all the rest were called one by one, and all except Tibert confessed the same as Bruin did,

Malefactors of base spirits and gluttonous dispositions, are in their affliction more dejected than others; and the terrour of punishment is most grievous to such, because their vexation ariseth not from the horrour and detestation of their forepassed evils; but from a sense of being utterly deprived of liberty, to persist in that course of life.

did, accuſing the Ape and the Wolf. But Tibert the Cat pleaded not Guilty; affirming as he was Secretary to the Wolf, he was obliged not to reveal his Maſters Secrets, therefore he was clear of this Treaſon. If ſo, ſaid the King, why did you lead a band of your own Lineage?

Fled none Sir, but went where I was sent, said the Cat. Then the King said, how say you Sir Firrapel? Mighty Prince, said the Libbard, This Sir Tibert was made Captain of the Scouts (which were all of his own Lineage) by the Lord Reynard; and if Scouts know not what they go about, and go only where they are sent, I leave that to your Majesty to judg. The King hearing this, said no more, but, Away with the Traytor, look to him Keeper. Then the King arose, and he and his Friends walked out into the Court-walks.

CHAP. XX.

How the Fox with his Soldiers made incursions the next day so eagerly on several of the Neighbouring Beasts, that they complain to the King.

During the time the Fox was in prosperity, and had abundance of all things, either given by way of Presents, or obtained by Delinquents forfeitures, the Neighbouring Beasts, that dwelt not far from Reynards Castle, had rest and peace, and therefore without fear were wont to walk abroad in the day-time all there about. But when Reynard was fled home in fear and great danger, with his Soldiers, intending there to abide a Siege, and protract the time as long as was possible, (for he knew he was now uncapable of mercy) he on a sudden set forth with two hundred Soldiers, who he commanded all to go silently along by the Hedges which encompassed a large Warren, where many Conies dwelt. These Conies fearless, and suspecting nothing, played and skipped about in the Sun-shine, as they were daily wont to do; but suddenly Reynard with his Soldiers rushed in among them, and slew two hundred outright presently, all which he bore away to his Castle. And immediately returned again, where several She-goates fed their young ones, all which young ones he and his Soldiers seized and carried home. Many other Incursions he made

Commonly the most peaceable feel the first strokes of War.

made that day further into the Country, and made great haboch and spoil. At this all the Neighbouring Beasts were a'arum'd, and resolved to stand upon their defence. But when they understood by the eldest of the Goats and Conies, who it was had done their Neighbours this great wrong, they resolved joyntly to go together to the Court and complain to the King; for by this time they had all notice of Reynard's Treason and Rebellion; and therefore had no doubt but they should be heard. So they in the Ebening came in troops to the Court-gates, where the Guard seeing them, demand the cause of their coming thus in multitudes? They answer, We are come to complain to his Majesty of the great Outrages Reynard and his company have committed. So the Guard acquainted the King, who immediately came forth to them; saying, Who is it that hath wronged you? The Conies answer, If your Majesty be pleased to hear us, we will truly declare what we have suffered. The King said, speak, we will hear you. Then one of the eldest among them said.

Dread Soveraign, We your Majesties peaceable Subjects, being imployed about our occasions in tending young ones, drew them forth to take the Air in the morning, the Traytor Reynard lying in watt (as it seems) with many Soldiers, suddenly slew two hundred of us, (for so many young and old are missing) and bear away the Bodies to his Castle of Malepardus, for there we saw him plainly go in with all his Soldiers, every one of them bearing one of our dear Friends, and Kinsfolks dead; this we could not have known, had not some of us adventured to run after them, to see which way they went, and who they were. Thus spake the Conies.

The Goats also made a like complaint of sudden surprising their Kids before they were aware. And all the other Beasts who had sustained wrong, exhibited their Complaints with tears in their eyes, earnestly requesting his Majesty to take compassion of them, and to a-

benge

benge their cause of such a bloody Murtherer. The King (in a rage shaking his curled locks) said, Be content, if I live I will avenge my self and you, on that cursed Traytor Reynard, to morrow by this time, if possible. So they bowing themselves very submissively, departed.

CHAP. XXI.

How the King with his Kinsfolks, and the Soldiers of Sir *Firrapel*, and his Cousin *Sly-look*, marched out of the Court to *Malepardus*, and there summoned the Fox to surrender himself.

EArly in the Morning the King willed Sir Firrapel and his Cousin Sly-look to command their Soldiers to make ready for a March, for he would speedily march to Malepardus, to be avenged of the Traytors Reynard and Bitelas. When the Soldiers were ready, the King sets out first with his eldest Son, Kinsfolks & Frends; then followed Sir Firrapel and his Cousin with their Soldiers, of whom, and of Serbitors, one hundred were left in the Court, to keep Guard there, and secure the Prisoners. When all that were appointed for this Expedition were gone forth, the Court-gates were diligently shut; and the King himself being foremost, made an halt, and turning him to his Son, said, Son, I this day commit the leading of the Army to your self, that if possible you may have the honour of finding out, and subduing the crafty and Trayterous Varlet Reynard. Therefore lead as you please, we all will follow, as well was we can. So this young Prince bowing himself to his Father and Frends, said no more but march on Sirs. And indeed he led so hard, without speaking ought, as he got within sight of Malepardus before Noon. When he saw the place, he stood still, and so did they all. Then the King said, now Son it will be good to rest here a while, and in the mean time to consider what we have to do. First of all we would do our best to learn of what strength our Enemies be, then whether it be best to besiege or assault them suddenly. For if we do not one of these, our labor will be to no purpose. If they will

not come forth to fight us, we must either begirt the place with our Soldiers, and so by length of time starve them, or suddenly with fire and sword endeavour to force the Castle, and so drive them forth. It is soon said, my Lord, to send out Scouts to discover what they can, is most necessary; but to begirt the Castle, we have not Forces enough, neither is that convenient at present, because we know not the private Avenues and Holes belonging to the Castle, how far they are extended, and they may happen to lie within them, and by that means when we only expect an Enemy before us, they issuing out, assault us behind, and on every side suddenly. It is well thought on, said the King. Therefore send out some of the nimblest Soldiers to espy whether they see any passing to and fro in the Castle. So Spies were sent, and charged to lie close at a good distance from the Castle round about. In a little time they discovered several Beasts laden with Provisions to pass in by holes under the Walls of Malepardus; and others not loaded, coming forth further off, and among those Scouts there was one, who see the Earth cast up just before him; he lying close a little while, at length see Reynard himself putting forth his Head; but he espying that the Coast was not clear, drew back: then did this Scout leap to the Hole, but the Fox had filled it up so in that short time, the Scout could not so much as put in one hand. He by this set a mark, and lay still, at length he spyed one of Reynard's Soldiers coming forth of another hole a little further off; him he suffered to come quite out, and then immediately seized him, and carryed him to the King. Others of the Scouts saw like passages, and some of them took of Reynard's Soldiers three or four other that were laden and going to the Castle. When all the Scouts were returned, it was found by their Relation, that none went into the Castle laden by those private holes, but by larger holes just under the Castle-walls. The King hearing this, examined the four Prisoners that were taken laden with Provisions first; they tell him, that the Fox and his Uncle Bitelas were within the Castle, and that with them the Soldiers in number were not a-

Here is shewed the danger of attempting any thing in War without good advice

And how beneficial a right understanding of the Enemy's condition is for a future management of Martial Affairs

bode

bobe Three hundred seventy-five in all, and that he had store of Provisions of all sorts; yet fearing that would not be enough, one half of the Soldiers were yesterday imployed in foraging, and the other half to day; withal adding, if his Majesty were pleased he might take near an hundred of them with their booty in a short time, for near so many were still out, and had not returned since morning; because they who went out yesterday had so alarum'd the Country thereabout, as near home nothing could be got. Then the King immediately sent out a great Party, here and there to lie in wait on every side. Having done this, he examined the Soldier that was taken coming out of an hole that lead from the Castle. He said, that the Lord Reynard (as he still called him) being informed by the Soldiers, who returned into the Castle with their Booty, that there were lyers in wait, and that your Majesty was near with an Army, was resolved to go forth by that Avenue where he was seen to put out his head, to see whether the report was true, and finding by his own experience that it was too true, he presently commanded me to run to the Soldiers that are yet out, and bid them to retire into Covert till night, and then come home; this I had done, had I not been taken, as your Majesty sees. So the King gave command to secure the Prisoners, yet that they should be used well. After this, the King again consulting with his Lords, determined to send a Summons to Reynard to deliver himself and Castle into the Kings hand. This Summons they judged convenient to send speedily, before the Fox knew what strength the King had, lest in the night he should work them some mischief. So Sir Firrapel the Libbard, with what Company he pleased, was appointed to Summon the Fox to deliver up his Castle. Sir Firrapel accordingly took forty Soldiers with him, and came as near to the Castle as he thought he might with safety, and called aloud, Sir Reynard, Sir Reynard, his Majesty commands you to deliver up your Fort, with all the Ammunition you have, into his hands this night, otherwise he is resolved to use all extremity to force it. By that time he had ended his

Traytors having forfeited their Lives, grow desperate, and will hearken to no Summons, but at the hearing thereof, are the more enraged.

Speech, a shower of stones was poured down upon him and his Soldiers, which hurt many of them, and doubtless had they been nearer, would have killed most of them. Sir Firrapel thus answered, hastens to the King, and shews him some of his Soldiers wounded. Upon this the King resolves to be revenged; therefore said to his Son, Son, I see it will be long work, and we have not Soldiers enough to lay a Seige. Therefore when those you have sent out be come in, encamp your selves as securely as you can, either in the place where you are, or further off from the Castle, not failing to keep good Guard all night; and I in the mean time will return home, and send out my Mandates for raising the Country speedily, and then undoubtedly we shall dispatch this business to our content. So the King went to Court, and his Son encamped the Army, who for that night supped with what the Scouts brought in.

CHAP. XXII.

How the Fox's Soldiers in the night assailed the King's Camp, and what ensued thereupon.

After Supper the Watch was ordered, and Officers appointed to change the Centries often, also to set Purdues to lie round about the Camp. All this while the Fox was not idle, but being extreamly discontented that he had lost so many of his Soldiers (for the Kings Scouts brought in above forty with their Booties) studied how he might most annoy his Enemies in the Night. Therefore in the dead of the Night he sent out a party of three hundred, adjoining them to march silently, and to encompass the Camp round, and when they were drawn very near to it in their encompassing, all at once to cry out aloud, Now for the Lord Reynard; and then immediately to assault the Centries first, and afterward the Camp it self (for he knew the Enemy were encamped very close together, so as three hundred Soldiers all in a File might conveniently encompass it) on every side. This party was led

led by his Uncle Bitelas (for the Fox would rather lose all the Friends he had, than endanger his own person) who very slyly marched his Soldiers in the form of an half Moon, that so they might keep together, and yet be in a posture ready to begirt the Camp suddenly. This enterprize of his was perceived by the Burdues, and timely intelligence given to the Lord Firrapel, who himself watched. He therefore on the other side of the Camp drew out his Soldiers, which he had in readiness, and dividing them in two parts, led one part himself, and left the other part to the leading of his Lieutenant; then march they softly round the Camp of two sides, to meet with the Horns of the Enemies Half-Moon, which they quickly met with, engaged and routed, and pursued them till they were driven close together, just before the other Gate of the Camp, right opposite to that out of which the Lord Firrapel issued; the other Soldiers that were at rest in the Camp, being allarum'd, they flank their Enemies, who were turned both ways to resist the Lord Firrapel and his Lieutenant; in this miserable plight, some throw down their Arms and yield themselves Prisoners, others are slain out-right, (among which Bitelas the Ape, their Captain, was one) many taken, because of their Wounds, which prevented their flight, and some escaped to carry the News to Malepardus. After the fight was done, they numbred the Captives, and found them to be a hundred and six, the dead they accounted not till morning; but then it appeared, that of the Kings Soldiers were slain six, and several wounded; but of Reynards Forces forty eight, so that of the three hundred that issued out of Malepardus, there returned but a hundred and forty six. Thus in one day and a night Reynard lost two hundred of his three hundred seventy five Soldiers, which he feared would be too many.

This Chapter shews how provident Commanders enervate and frustrate the policy and rage of their Enemies.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

How the King gave command to proclaim all Traytors that assisted *Reynard*, promising pardon to those that would desert him, &c.

EArly in the morning the news of this Victory, and of the death of Bitelas the Ape, was carryed to Court by one purposely sent thither to acquaint his Majesty how matters went. The King greatly pleased with the news, thought of another way to weaken Reynard, before the Countrey did come in. Therefore he by the same Messenger sent an express order to his Son to draw out all his Forces out of the Camp, and to march to Malepardus, as close as was conbenient, and there in his name to proclaim all Traytors that assisted Reynard, withal promising pardon to all that would desert him. Upon this Message the Kings Son drew out all the Forces he had (leaving not one in the Camp, for he feared no enemy) and marched directly to Malepardus; being thither come, and within the hearing of those within, he commanded silence, and afterward caused the Cryer to proclaim all Traytors that assisted Reynard, but present pardon to all those who would within three hours desert him. Upon the hearing of this, near an hundred of Reynard's Soldiers fled from him, and came and offered their Service to the King. But ere this was effected, some thousands of the Commons who had been summoned by the King, marched toward Malepardus. The Kings Son seeing them, sent out certain Scouts to enquire what they were? they answer, they were summoned by the King to come and assist his Son, in taking the Traytor Reynard. So the young Prince being glad of this Supply, did forthwith command them to begirt the Castle. They accordingly lye down before it all that day, but see no enemy appear. In the mean while, the Kings Son orders the Lord Firrapel, and his Cousin Sly-look, to imploy their Soldiers to march at some distance round about Malepardus, that wheresoever they saw any Avenues, or private holes, they

It is commonly seen, that the followers of Traytors readily forsake them, when they see a probability of securing themselves.

they might ſtop them with heavy ſtones; withal commanding to ſet out Scouts, who ſhould lie cloſe in manner of Purdues, the better to deſcry the outgoing of the Enemies. All theſe things being done, no Enemy was ſeen, either to appear in the Caſtle, or to come forth by thoſe private Avenues, (which as faſt as they could they ſtopped

ſtopped) or by any other new made hole. Therefore now nothing was thought on but a ſtorm, yet night being ſo near, they judged it not ſeaſonable to begin the Aſſault until morning; in the mean while, care was taken that the Holes and Abenues ſhould be watched all night. This was accordingly done.

CHAP. XXIV.

How the Fox's Caſtle was ſtormed, and all within it killed, only *Reynard* himſelf taken alive, as the Kings Son commanded.

Bold Adventures are hazardous, therefore the wiles of an Enemy ſhould always be ſuſpected.

EArly on the Morrow ſcaling Ladders being brought, and all things ready for a Storm, (the Soldiers only waited for the word of Command) Sir Firrapel the Libbard was commanded with his Soldiers to begin the aſſault. But the Fox who all this while was not idle, had provided for their coming before-hand, and round about the Caſtle Walls on the inſide had digged deep Trenches of a great depth, which ſtood full of water, by him drawn thither from a Spring, which ſtood within his Caſtle. Over this Trench upon the Walls he had made a falſe Battlement ſeemingly ſtrong, on which when four hundred of the Soldiers (commanded by Sir Firrapel) had got up, the Battlements breaking down, they fell into the Trenches, where moſt of them drowned one another in ſtriving to get out, the reſidue were killed by Reynards Soldiers,

This overthrow perplexed Sir Firrapel and the Prince exceedingly; for the poſſibility of storming it ſeemed now to be taken away. Therefore the Prince conſults with all his Friends about the preſent Buſineſs. After a little time it was agreed by them to ſend up certain Soldiers to the top of the Wall, with order not to attempt to leap down, what provocation ſoever was given, but to ſhoot and fling at their Enemies, if need were, and to ſtop how the Abenues belonging to the Caſtle had their in-

in-let. They accordingly march up round about the Castle, and met with no small provocations from the Enemy (who were but few in number) yet they observed what they were commanded, and between whiles well viewed the Trench, and over it they espyed several Bridges, many in number round about, yet all of them were so narrow, as but one Soldier could pass a-breast upon them at once. This intelligence being given to the Prince, he commanded two thousand Soldiers to employ themselves in opening the Avenues, and making them wider, which was speedily done; then he ordered more Soldiers to ascend the Walls, thereby to amuse the Enemy, giving them command to shout and sing, but keeping in their places. Whilst this was doing he sent in six hundred Soldiers through the Avenues, and commanding them to fight resolutely, and get over the Bridges, then to slay all they found in the Castle, except only Reynard himself; and for their encouragement he promised them among them full one half of the Booty that should be taken therein; and that if any died in the attempt (as he hoped none would) his Wife and Children should have all his part duly given to them.

Here is seen how Assailants adventuring too rashly, are taught by their own loss to be afterward more wary.

Promise of Reward is absolutely necessary in dangerous attemps.

With this encouragement they boldly entred the Avenues, some of which stunk so abominably, as the Soldiers were almost poysoned; nevertheless they hastned forward, and got to the mouths of those Holes where they plainly saw the Bridges, and Reynard's Soldiers standing here and there one, very near them. But by the mouths of the Holes they saw another out-let, one of which being opened, it was found to be one of them Holes by which the Fox's Soldiers were wont to enter, when laden with Booty. Upon this Sir Firrapel gave command, that all the other Holes (which were as many as there were private Avenues) should be opened; this was accordingly done by the six hundred Soldiers who were in those Avenues, but durst not venture over the Bridges. Now when they saw great numbers might speedily have entrance that way to back them, they were encouraged, and boldly set forward.

Yet in the mean while Reynard's Soldiers attempted to pluck up the Bridges; but because they were shot at, both from the top of the Walls, and also from the mouths of the Holes, they could not effect what they desired. Therefore as they gave back, the Kings Soldiers came forward, and in a very short time above one thousand got over the Bridges; then they flew about like wild Beasts, killing all they found, and indeed all that were in the Castle died at that time; and Reynard himself was knockt down with a Battle-axe by a Soldier who knew him not; but his fellow seeing him about to kill the Fox, said, That is the Traytor himself. Then that Soldier who had knockt him down, led him out of the Castle, and carryed him to the Prince, who rejoiced exceedingly that his Enemy was taken alive. After this, the Soldiers that first entred, had half the Booty, and the residue was divided among the whole Army.

CHAP. XXV.

Of dissolving of the Army, and how *Reynard* the Fox was carried Prisoner to the Court, and what passed after this.

AS soon as this work was ended, and the Castle demolished, the Prince sent home all those Soldiers who were raised by Summons for his Assistance immediately; and then with the two hundred Soldiers of Sir Firrapel that remained alive, and all his other Friends, he marched to Court, leading the Fox along with them. A little before Sun-set they were all come to the Court, where they were welcomed by the King, with great expressions of Joy, only some sorrow was intermixed by reason of the loss of those four hundred brave Soldiers who were drowned and killed by the Fox's policy. Therefore the King at that time before he sate down, declared that the two hundred Soldiers yet living should be retained as a Guard for his Person, and over them Sir Firrapel the Libbard should be chief commander,

mander, and his Lieutenant-General of all Forces that should be raised at any time ever after, when need should be. But unto Sly-look the Panther, Firrapel's Cousin, he said, As for you my Lord, I intend to constitute you the Keeper of my Stores, and Steward of my House. After this, he spake to all his Friends: praising their readiness and valour; and to them he promised Gifts and Rewards, as soon as all his trouble was over; therefore he willed and desired them not to depart, until the Execution of Reynard and all the Traytors was passed.

When the King had ended his Speech, his Son asked him, if he would see the Traytor Reynard? The King answered, No, not at this time, let him be bound, and diligently looked to, that he escape not; Upon this, the Soldiers that guarded the Fox, haled him to the Prison, and there in a stinking hole chained him to a stake that was fixed in the ground.

Then the King royally feasted his Friends, and the two Lords, Firrapel and Sly-look. Also to every Company of Soldiers he sent a large Pittance, so they all feasted right joyfully: But the Prisoners in the hearing of all this were almost pined with hunger, especially Isegrim the Wolf. After the Feast was over, and all the King Servitors had supped, they gave to every Prisoner a few scraps, and carryed into them a small quantity of dirty water. And indeed their usage was so hard, as they all even wished Death rather than Life.

CHAP. XXVI.

How the Fox was brought before the King, and Examined; of the Answer he gave; and how he and all the other Traytors were condemned.

ON the Morrow the King sitting among his Nobles and Friends, said, I suppose it is now high time that we call Reynard before us. To which they all assented. Therefore Sir Firrapel went to the Prison, and commanded that Reynard should be brought forth. His Keeper presently obeying, loosed Reynard from the Stake to which he was chained, and by his chain led him into the Kings Presence. The King at the sight of him was so fraught with Ire as he could not speak, until a little time being passed, his fury was allayed; then he said aloud, False Miscreant, how darest thou to hold up thy head, (for the Fox seemingly undaunted, stedfastly looked upon the King) who art so loaden with Vices, as the worst of all living Creatures is not more vile! Was it not enough for you (base Traytor) to insinuate into my affections so far, by Dissimulations (as now I have great reason to judg) as to engage me to invest that monstrously wicked and cruel Beast Isegrim, with an Office (due to the best of Creatures) and Title so honourable; but also to perswade me to create perfidious Bruin Earl of the Forests; and last of all (as if before you had not been vile enough) to instigate these and all my Nobles at once against me; and all this for your own base ends, which can never be accomplished? Have I honoured you for this end? Or would any Creature living have thought that he who I most honoured, would have conspired my Ruin most? What sayest thou to this?

Politick persons dissemble their fear till an aggravation of their Crimes makes them relent

To this the Fox said not one word; but at last hung down his head. The King said, speak wretch, or I will pronounce Sentence against you speedily. At last the Fox said, My Lord, I have so many Enemies that it will be in vain to say any thing contrary to what they have affirmed;

ſtrued; and ſince I know I muſt die; I here before your Majeſty declare I am guilty of what is laid to my charge, and would have ſlain your Majeſty (for which I am now right ſorrowful) if my deſign had not been fruſtrated by the Treaſon of Firrapel and his Couſin. It is enough, ſaid the King, call in all the other Traytors, that as they conſpired together, ſo they may together hear their Sentence of Death juſtly pronounced againſt them; and then their Execution ſhall quickly follow. So all the Traytors were brought in. Then did the King with the advice of his Friends, in this manner proceed to judgment. Since you are all now together (except Bitelas the Ape, who died a death too honourable for his merit) we judg it meet you ſhould all hear your ſentence at one time. Therefore Reynard firſt hearken to your Sentence: Becauſe you have Trayterouſly endeavoured the Subverſion of our Government, and Royal Dignity, I condemn you to Death, in this manner to be executed upon you. Firſt, you ſhall be dragged contumelouſly from this Place to the Place of Execution, and there your right hand ſhall be cut off, afterward you ſhall be hanged by the neck until you are dead dead. After death your head ſhall be cut off, and together with your right hand be ſet up in publick view, on ſome conſpicuous place, for a terror to all Traytors for the future. Unto the Wolf he alſo repeated the above-ſaid words, and pronounced the ſame Sentence exactly in all points. But on all the other Traytors, he only pronounced the Sentence of Death in manner and form as you have heard, except in cutting off their heads, and right hands, which was not mentioned in their Sentences.

After this the Priſoners were taken away until the place and time of Execution was fully determined, and agreed on by the King and his Friends.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the Fox's Confeſſion, and the Execution of himſelf and all the Traytors.

IN the Evening of the ſame day that Judgment was given, the King and his Friends again conſulted together about the place and time of Execution. At length it was agreed on, that the place ſhould be on the outſide of that Foreſt, out of which the Traytors marched to put their deſign in execution. And the time, the next morning early. In the mean while, that all things ſhould be provided in readineſs, and the Priſoners have notice of their death to near approaching.

Now when the Morrow was come, and the King and his Friends were gone before to take their ſtandings commodiouſly to behold the Preſs; (which they knew would be great) The Fox himſelf, and all the other Traytors were led out of their ſeveral Priſons; then were their legs and hands tyed, the Halters with which they were to be hanged, were faſtned about their necks, and by them they were dragged (with hootings and ſhouts of the multitude) to the place of Execution: When their Ladders were erected againſt the Trees, (which were more than enough to hang all the Traytors) and each Priſoner, by his Executioner, led up thoſe Ladders, and immediately the Executioners faſtned the ropes to the Trees (ſuppoſing they muſt be hanged as ſoon as they came there) becauſe it was the cuſtom of their Country in other Caſes to hang Malefactors preſently; but the King ſpake to the Executioners, and ſaid, Be not too haſty, if any of the Priſoners will purge himſelf by confeſſion he ſhall have as free liberty as any one of our ſubjects hath, who dieth on his bed. The Fox hearing this, ſaid,

Dread Soveraign, and you my Lords here preſent, I am not a little comforted, that I have liberty to eaſe my mind, which is ſorely burthened with the horror of my Sins; I

have

have been a loose Liver all my days; I have often pretended Sanctity, and amendment of Life, yet all was Hypocrisie. I slew Kayward the Hare though Bellin died for

Murther will out at one time or another Subtlety betrays the Innocent to death

for it: Oh Bellin, thy death, and the great ruin that hath ever since befell thy Family, is all the effect of my falseness. The King hearing this, was extreamly troubled and said, What! have we put to death a righteous person through false information? Alas! what have we done? To this the Fox said, It is so, noble King, I am the person who wrought so great mischief; and I also perswaded your Majesty to advance Sir Isegrim the Wolf, and Sir Bruin the Bear, for my own ends. I likewise was so wicked, as designedly to give them and all the other Lords Gifts and Presents often, and then spake to Isegrim to perswade the Lords to make me King in your Majesties stead, as they would have done, if Sir Firrapel and his Cousin had not betrayed us all. Besides, in all cases that ever were brought before me, I always more sought my own interest than the execution of Justice, yet was still seemingly just, by which means I gained so great Riches, as I not knowing my self, would have been what your Majesty is, &c. Then the King said to the Fox, Well Reynard, I have heard you, and do now plainly perceive, that if you had died for your first faults, you had not lived to have perpetrated so great and enormous Crimes; therefore for the future, neither fair words, nor ought else shall oblige me to pardon Malefactors deserving death.

Riches puff up; and when men of low degree attain to great wealth and honour, they (not knowing how to bridle their inordinate Appetites) do very often aspiring higher ruin themselves, as by this History is plainly evident.

The King having said this, ordered the Executioner to do his Office; so he immediately cut off Reynard's right hand, and afterward turned him off the Ladder. In the mean while the King spake to Sir Isegrim the Wolf, and said, Isegrim, have you any thing to say before the Executioner do his his Office? Nothing, Sir, said the Wolf, (looking roguishly) except I was drawn in by the Fox's subtility; and his great promises made me forget my Loyalty to your Majesty, and readily to absolve both him and Sir Bruin of their oath of fidelity sworn to your Majesty, and by me administred. Oh execrable Villain, said the King, what! durst you release any Subject of his sworn fealty to us? After this the King would not hear him any further; but spake to the Executioner, and said, Dispatch this Varlet out of my sight quickly,

quickly. So the Executioner presently cut off his hand, and then turned him off the Ladder. Next to him Sir Bruin the Bear was asked, if he had ought to say? but he answered, No; and so was quickly turned off. After him all the rest in order was asked, if they would say any thing before they died? but they all answered, They could say no more than they had already said in their Examination; therefore they were all turned off. After it was supposed the Traytors were dead, the King gave command they should be cut down, and their bodies buried in one Pit. Accordingly they were all cut down, being all stark dead, except Tibert the Cat, who stirred a little, therefore his brains were beat out by one of the Guard; and the bodies of them all were thrown into one Pit, except the Heads and right Hands of Reynard and Isegrim, which were carried to the Palace, and there set on Pales, placed on the uppermost Tower of the same, so high as they might be easily seen by all that passed by the Court.

Thus have you as true an account of these matters as ever was given by any man that saw them not. If you would know what this grand Treason produced, peruse the following Chapters which will inform you more plainly, than can be expressed without a Fable.

CHAP. XXVIII.

How the King and all his Nobles returning home, ruminated the Fox's Confession, and what was the effect of their consultation.

When the Traytors were buried, and the Hands and Heads of Reynard and Isegrim fixed upon Pales, as is said. The King and his Nobles (being come home) sat down together in the Court, all of them pondering much the words of Reynard touching Bellins death. At length the King (as one greatly perplexed said, My Lords, and Frends, it grieves me not a little, that our Chapl. Bellin, was long since so basely put to death, and his Family ruined so, as I question whether

Although innocent persons may long remain injured, yet in process of time the cause of their oppression comes to be known, and then the redress is nigh at hand.

any of that Stock be now remaining in the World. To this one of the Kings Friends (who was present when Isegrim was chose chief Prelate) said, Soveraign Lord, think not so, for I am certain, that many of them were living when Isegrim was made Prelate; because I there saw several of them, but would not be known I saw them, for fear of your Majesties displeasure against them. Sure, said the King, it is not possible! I suppose your eye deceived you; however, if it were so then, it is too probable, that they are all dead since, because the Sons and Kindred of Isegrim, although very numerous, had all of them Furr-Gowns like Bellin's (which Isegrim himself wore) not long after they were confirmed in the Priestly Function: for many more of Isegrim's Kindred came into him after the choice of the Commons, than were that day present upon the Scaffold with us, and yet all these had such Furr-Gowns, which they could never have had, if so many of Bellin's Kindred had not been first slain and stript, &c. To this, the same Lord replied, Noble Sir, I am most certain, that in secret places of your Majesties Realm, there are thousands of them yet living. It is well if it be so, said the King. After this Discourse was ended, the King again said, Worthy Friends, I too well know, that we have confirmed the Priestly Office, not on Isegrim only, but on his whole Lineage and Kindred, who are all ravenous Beasts void of all goodness; nay I think, the worst of all Creatures living; although the Fox by his subtilty blinded my eyes, and Isegrims pretended demure carriage alienated my Judgment. For had honest Bellin yet lived, treacherous Reynard could never have thought of working our ruin; nor ever could that cursed Miscreant Isegrim, have contributed any assistance to his disloyal intentions. The young Prince seeing his Father speak with so great earnestness, said, Royal Father, why is your Majesty troubled at the Advancement of Isegrims Lineage? let it be signified by Proclamation, that in their Father's Crime, they have all forfeited their Offices; and besides, that upon good and sure grounds, your Majesty well

knows

knows, that they are the Destroyers of your Subjects, and continually in their masked Habits, and under a pretence of Sanctity they rob, and pill them so bare, as of necessity your Kingdom must be ruined if they be permitted to live in all excess and riot; for of all the Beasts under your Majesties Authority, there are none so debauched and vicious as they. This Speech of the Prince was seconded by several others of the Kings Friends, all inveighing bitterly against Isegrim's Lineage. The King hearing this, said, Sirs, what think you is best to be done? If we lay aside this Generation (I mean displace them of their Offices) and yet let them hold their Wealth, they may in time by their Riches work no great wrong. To this that Friend of the Kings who first spake, said, Noble Sir, to lay aside this impious flock is honourable; but to take away their Wealth will have no good aspect in the eyes of the Vulgar (whose censure is seldom right) because they will impute their displacing to arise from no other cause, than that they were rich, or (to speak more plainly) because your Majesty was disposed to seize on all they had. Therefore if your Majesty please to displace the Wolves, there needs no care to be taken of the Wealth they have; for if other of your Subjects, whose eyes are open, do but once find that they are out of your Majestys favour, which way the wealth of these Miscreants must needs go, any one (without the help of Astrology) may easily conjecture; because whensoever they are displaced and out of favour, there will be so many complaints made of their Extortions, as (undoubtedly) all they have will be too little to make recompence for the wrong they have done. Besides, if none of all this be, they are such monstrous Gluttons as will be necessitated to eat up all in a short time. You say well, said the King; I heartily believe, if all those Wolves were but stript of this their disguise, and compelled to put off their Furr-Gowns, the Blind then would as clearly see as the other clear sighted Beasts you speak of. It is true, noble King, (said the same Lord) pull but off the Mask, there needs no more. Well then said the King, that I will not fail to do speedily.

Prudent advice to avoid Vulgar censure.

Many men willingly are blinded, and by cunning Sycophants oppressed; because they judg of things as they appear, and not as they really are in themselves.

Masks and Disguises constrain most men to judg amiss.

CHAP. XXIX.

How the King made Proclamation, that no Beasts should walk disguised in other Garments, than what were naturally theirs, and what ensued thereupon.

THe next day early the King caused a Proclamation to be drawn, the tenour whereof ran thus.

Leo Rex

Whereas several of our Subjects wear Disguises, and since under such Masks and false Habits, many Mischiefs have been committed, and some of those Persons allowed to wear such like Disguises, have proved Traytors to our Royal Crown and Dignity; We therefore will and command all our Subjects in general, whether high or low, of what state or condition soever, that after ten days next ensuing the Publication hereof, they presume not to wear any Disguise whatsoever, nor at any time, day or night, to walk clothed in other Garments than what are naturally their own: upon pain of being proceeded against as Traytors to our Royal Crown and Dignity. &c.

After the proclaiming and publishing hereof, Isegrims Lineage were greatly perplexed, because there was not one of them, if in Office, but he wore a Furr Gown, which was not his own natural Garment: Therefore they consult together what was fit to be done in such a time of affliction as this. But in all their consultations they never thought of mending their manners, but how to insinuate into the King's favour, thereby to prevent this terrible storm, that (they saw) would make greatest spoil among them. But because their Father Isegrim, and Champion Reynard were dead, they could conceive no hope of obtaining their end, unless by bribing some of the principal Courtiers. This they resolve upon, and though otherwise extream covetous; therefore every one liberally offers part of his wealth, which being given into the custody of two of the oldest among them,

those

those two journeys to Court, and carry (or cause to be carried) with them a great mass of Treasure, which they present to Sly-look the Panther, who was lately made the King's Steward, and Keeper of his Stores; withal protesting to him, that they were utterly ignorant of their Fathers Treason, and therefore desired the Kings Favour and Protection, which if he would procure, as they doubted not but he could, they would (upon receiving his Majesties Royal Patent, for preserving them in their Offices and Habits) give him twice so much as they had now presented him with. The Panther takes the Present, and with a pretended secresie, causes it to be conveyed into his own Lodgings; then he bids them wait a while, and he would move the King in their behalf. They stay without in hopes of speeding well, but Sly-look shews all the Treasure he had taken, to the King, withal telling him, how he came by it, and for what end it was presented him. The King hearing his relation, and seeing so great a mass of Wealth, with a promise of twice so much; feared they would (being so rich) be able to injure him at one time or other; therefore, before he would let the Panther give any answers to the two Wolves, he advised with his Lords and Friends thereabout. When they heard the whole matter, they told the King, if his Majesty pleased, they could easily rid him of his fear; for, say they, let your Steward Sly-look put them off for this time, with a delay, saying your Majesty is not at leisure. When they come again, let him tell them, unless they bring him more Treasure, he will not trouble himself in the business, or the like. If the Steward manage his affairs well, he may easily get all their Wealth into his hands. To this the King said I am content to leave the business wholly to my Lord Sly-looks discretion. Therefore my Lord (the King turning himself to the Panther) Sly-look, I give you as large a commission as you will, provided you do not in my name promise a continuation of their Disguise. The Panther goes to the two Wolves, tells them, his Majesty is now very busie in Council, therefore he can do nothing till the next

Wicked persons in distress think not of taking good courses, but study how by indirect means to acquit themselves of the present danger. Also they being unfaithful themselves, can very rarely find a faithful friend, as appears by the Panthers action here related.

next day, then ſo ſoon as he underſtood they were come, he would ſpeak to the King. But next time they came, he told them he had preſented all that they gave him, to another Lord, and lett himſelf nothing; for he perceived they had but few Friends in the Court, therefore he ſhould need much more Treaſure than they gave him yeſterday,

other-

other wise all he could do would signifie nothing; for, said he, if less than four Lords be engaged for you, when your business comes to the Vote, it will be impossible to carry it. With these and like Expressions he drew almost all the Wealth of Isegrims whole Lineage into the Kings Coffers; & at length brought in these two Wolves before the King. When the King saw them, he said, what do you already begin to tread the steps of the Traytor your Father? They answer trembling, No, and it please your Majesty. Why then did you bribe my Steward with so great a mass of Wealth? more I fear, than ever you came honestly by. At this, they stood amazed, and knew not what to say. Then the King (turning to the Panther) said, My Lord you have their Treasure, see it be not diminished, nor mixed with any of my mine, for I purpose, now 'tis here, it shall be kept until I am better informed touching this perfidious Generation; for I suspect, I shall ere long have so many complaints exhibited against them, as all this Treasure they have brought, and much more, will not repay the damages they have done. In the mean while (turning to the Wolves) he said, See you demean your selves peaceably, and when the date of our Proclamation is out, be sure that none of you be found in this Disguise; for whosoever he be that presumes to wear a Disguise one day after that prefixed time, he shall certainly die as a Traytor. As to you Offices, I do not take them from you presently, but as you demean yourselves, so you may enjoy them sometime longer, or but for a very short time; the last of which I rather think.

Having said this, he dismissed the Lords, who were sat in Counsel with him. So the Wolves departed sad enough.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

How the King desirous to see some of *Bellins* Kindred, caused three of the oldest of them to be sent for, &c.

When the cause of jealousie is removed, cheerfulness necessarily follows.

AFter the Wealth of the Wolves was thus taken, and the Kings jealousie thereabout allayed, he became very pleasant and merry; and in that merry mood, said, My Friends, I should be glad to see some of the Rams Kindred; therefore if any of you know them, our pleasure is, that he go to them, and bring two or three of the oldest among them, before us. Then the Lord, who had before told the King there were thousands of them living in secret places, said, If it be your Majesties pleasure to see any of Bellins stock, I can easily satisfie your Majesty therein, for I am familiarly acquainted with many of them, especially with Bellins Grandson, and two more of the Eldest of them, who by reason of their discretion, have retired themselves from the fury of the Bear and Wolf, and live safely in a small piece of ground well fenced. The King hearing this, said, Send for the three you speak of, or go your self and fetch them. So that Lord immediately went to the Meadow, where they three dwelt alone; and first saluted them (as he was wont at other times) afterward told his Errand, withal in what condition the Wolfs Kindred stood, and how they were like to lose their Offices suddenly. They knowing the reality of their Friend, doubted nothing, but went along with him to the Court. When they were thither come, they by the same Lord, were brought into the Kings presence, who looking cheerfully upon them, said, I am glad to see you indeed, for I supposed you had been all destroyed before this time. I do confess, when I gave my consent to the publishing that Edict, I thought I had done that which was right; but since understanding by the Traytor Reynards subtil words, that he was the Murtherer of Kayward, and not your Father; I heartily repented of what I had

had done. Therefore before you depart from us, we will abolish that law, and every part of it totally, as if it had never been. Accordingly that Law was repealed and made void that very day, and Proclamation made, that if any Beast whatsoever committed any out-rage against any of Bellins Lineage, young or old, they should die for it. Upon this, these three persons were so well satisfied and assured of their peace and safety, as they came daily to visit this Lord, and sometimes went in to the King himself, owning his favour and protection as the greatest happiness that could befall them. Also the King himself delighted in their company very much; for seeing their simplicity and good behaviour, he was not a weary of seeing them, but rather thought they were long absent, if he saw them not once a day.

And a good Prince, having once consented to the wrong of others, through the perfidious actings of treacherous persons, is never satisfied till he hath compleatly recompenced that wrong as far as is possible.

CHAP. XXXI.

How the Wolves behaved themselves in their Office after the Date of the Proclamation was expired, and how they were suddenly ruined.

By this time the ten daies expressed in the Kings Proclamation were fully ended, and the Wolves (much against their wills) had laid aside their Disguises. Upon this whensoever any one of the Commons came to any of their Houses to commune with them, or present them any thing; so soon as he saw the Wolf (not masked) he would run away as hard as he could; and acquaint all he met, that he went to one of the Prelates Sons, and found none in his house, except a Wolf looking gastly upon him. The Wolves perceiving they were utterly undone, if their Clients should be constantly thus frighted, knew not what course to take: therefore the subtlest of them, when any of the Commons came either to see them, or to pay their Dues, or to present them with ought, laid themselves down, pretending they were not well: and that they might not be seen as they were, they spread over them a Coverlet of some other skin, (as

if they were laid in a Sweat by the Physicians order) and so under that would speak, admitting them to leave what they brought, in such or such a corner of the House. This shift held water a while, but long it could not; for the most inconsiderate, and the youngest of the Wolves would rather run the hazard than be Carbed; therefore they again put on their Gowns, and such as came to them then, were not frighted, as the other (who saw them without those Gowns) had been. But so soon as this was blazed abroad, some of Bellins friends came to the Houses of these foolish Wolves, and well marking them, said nothing, but went and immediately informed against them; offering to prove their contempt of the King and his Laws. When this their Relation was heard by the King, he sent for those Wolves, and after proof made of their contempt, he hanged up Seventeen of them; for no more were then taken, the other being fled for fear. The Execution of these terrified all the other so, as if you would have perswaded them (with an assurance of never so great secresie) to have put their Gowns on again but for one minute, they would not have done it; nay, they absolutely hated that Garb ever after. By this means the Wolves were in extream penury; and needs must so be; for in a very short time it was known to all the Commons, that the Lineage of Pitwood, and he himself, had been, and were, all very Wolves; and that Furr-Gown which Pitwood himself wore, and all the Gowns of his Lineage, were the true and natural Garments of Bellin, and Bellins Kindred, which Garments they took from them, as often as any one of that Race fell into their hands. The matter being thus clearly known, the King had no need to think of displacing them; because their Offices fell from them immediately after it was fully understood what they were. For all the Commons did not only fly from them, but also banded together against them; and if in the day-time any one of them stirred abroad, he was in danger of his Life, they all crying, A Wolf, a Wolf, kill him, kill him. This hard usage made the Wolves to keep close,

Wolfish Natures when openly seen, are abominable to all.

and

and not be ſeen abroad at all in the day-time; in the night they of neceſſity muſt go forth to purvey for food, and accordingly they did, but always in fear of being taken; ſo as they ever after led a poor and miſerable Life, until they either died, or were forgot.

CHAP. XXXII.

How the King rejoycing at the Wolves ruin, distributed their wealth among the Commons, and then openly shewed his love to Bellin's Kindred, and commanded all his Subjects to follow their Instructions, &c.

WHen the King saw the effect of his Proclamation, what a ruin it had brought on Isegrims Lineage, he was highly contented in his mind, and said, (to that Lord, who before said, Pull but off the Mask, and there needs no more) now my Friend the Mask is off, and there needs no more. With that, the same Lord bowed himself and said, Your Majesty is now freed from the care of displacing them. But who would have thought, they should so suddenly have been ruined? How could it be otherwise, said the King? certainly the Traytor Reynard well knew, that Isegrim would never have been admitted by the Commons into his Office, had he not worn that Disguise. For Isegrim and his whole Tribe were always hateful to the Commons, and would always have been so, if Reynards policy had not been observed and put in practice by them. Besides, Isegrim (for his own part) carried himself so demurely, and spake so seldom, as even I my self was more than half perswaded, he changed his nature, and with his new Gown put on another Nature, directly contrary to that of his own. But I now clearly see, that a Wolf will be a Wolf what Coat soever he wears. Therefore I am heartily glad his whole Lineage is at this time reduced to their pristine condition. Nevertheless, that may not in time to come be upbraided by any of those ungrateful Beasts, with the retaining their Treasure, I will speedily order the distribution of the same, among the Commons in general, especially amongst those who have sustained damage by them.

The true Emblem of a Noble Prince.

The next day the King called all his Lords and Friends to Council, where he declared his intentions of distributing

ing the Treasure of the Wolves among the Commons, and principally among such as had sustained loss, or injury by them. To this they all assented, applauding the Kings Nobleness. Then the King commanded the Lord Sly-look, and his Cousin Firrapel the Libbard, to order the distribution thereof with as much equity as was possible.

Now while this was a doing, the King again called his Lords and Friends about him, and said, Worthy Friends, We unadvisedly and through false accusation condemned our Chaplain Bellin, and his Kindred; therefore, since our error is discovered, and the Murther for which Bellin was condemned, is acknowledged by Reynard that false Traytor, to be perpetrated by himself; it concerns us in some extraordinary manner to recompence the great wrongs that Family hath sustained for so long a time, and all that through a misunderstanding of ours, and through too great credulity of what we saw: for though Bellin brought Kayward the Hare's head to us, yet the Fox slew the Hare, and put it in his own Male, and then tied the Male about Bellins Neck; through which notorious crime craftily hatled, by that wretched Miscreant Reynard, our judgment was deceived, Bellin was put to Death, his Lineage made a prey to the Bear and the Wolf, and we and all our Family brought even to the brink of ruin.

These words were uttered by the King with so great earnestness, as all his Lords and Friends were very much affected therewith; therefore they said, It is in your Majesties power to honour and respect them as much as you please; we all will readily obey in whatsoeber your Majesty shall command thereabout. The King hearing them thus speak, said, Worthy Friends, since you so readily have offered to follow our advice, and obey our Commands, we accept the same kindly; and therefore will now offer what we think most expedient in this case.

You all know, we by our Proclamation have already taken them into our Protection; yet you nor we our self

cannot

cannot suppose that a sufficient recompence; therefore, since raise the Dead we cannot, to the Living let us shew as much kindness as shall be convenient; for when the Commons perceive that we not only protect, but also respect Bellins Kindred, they in imitation of us will do the like. And that our respect, and the good opinion we have of them, may the more certainly be known to all our Subjects in general, we will give command, that they all behave themselves lovingly and friendly towards them; so doing, undoubtedly we shall unite all our meaner Subjects in love to each other, and we our selves be so much the more happy.

This resolution of the Kings was immediately assented to, and put in execution. And from that day forward the Ram's Kindred walked up and down safe, and found friends and friendly Entertainment in all places wheresoever they came. The King himself, and his Nobles observing the great Gravity of this Brock (by him supposed to be utterly extinct) made Bellins Grandson his Counsellor; all the other Nobles seeing this, entertained one, or more of the Ram's Kindred, to be always residing in, or near their own Lodgings. This familiarity with Bellins Kindred, wrought an alteration in the King and Lords; for they heretofore were wont to fare delicately, and to feed on divers sorts of meats; also upon slight occasions to be cholerick and angry; they now seeing the great temperance and meekness of their new Sociates, began to feed more sparingly, and not of so many sorts at one time; holding this course a while, they found themselves not so prone to choler or anger as before. The King observing this change not in himself only, but in all his Friends and Nobles, was willing to propagate it further; therefore he by publick Proclamation, commanded all his Subjects high and low to entertain familiarity with the Ram's Kindred, also to take example by them, and follow their Instructions in all things tending to sobriety and love. This Proclamation was exactly obeyed by the Commons in general, who ever after lived in such peace and love, as the like hath scarcely ever been

As evil Communication corrupts good Manners, so on the other hand good Examples if followed, produce the well-being of Mankind.

been heard of since the beginning of that Kingdom. The King finding this change in all his Subjects universally, was highly pleased, and rewarded all his Friends nobly.

The height of all Happiness in this world, consists in the Righteousness of King and People.

A POSTSCRIPT.

Friendly Reader,

IN the foregoing History, I have not in any wise deviated from my first intention, which was to frame a Second Part to the delightful *History of Reynard the Fox*, which might yeild thee both pleasure and profit. If any one be offended, let his offence be to himself; my intent was not to give distaste but delight. Nor have I in the foregoing History let slip any Expressions tending to the vitiating, or debauching of Youth, but have rather couched my words so, as the intelligent may be profited, and the disingenious not injured. Therefore I desire this my Labour may be as well taken as meant; If so, I shall be encouraged to divulge a more serious peice, (not of Beasts, but of Men) so soon as time and opportunity will permit. Farewell.

FINIS.

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